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Arab-Israeli Talks

'Arafat, Rabin Discuss Need To Advance Process

LD1204143994 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1300 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin had a telephone conversation today on the eve of the expiry date of a deadline set for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

The talks focused on a series of facts revolving around the need to give a push to the current negotiations in Cairo to achieve tangible results and to avoid all that could halt the peace process.

Israeli, PLO Negotiators Continue Talks in Cairo

Agreement Reached on Several Issues

TA1204142694 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Israel and the PLO decided to discuss several disputed issues after the Gaza-Jericho agreement is signed, Major General Amnon Shahaq, head of the Israeli delegation, announced in Cairo.

Our correspondent in Cairo Arye Gus reports that the two sides decided that the Palestinian police force in Gaza and Jericho will number 9,000 men, with 6,000 of them to be deployed immediately after the agreement is signed. They will be armed with automatic rifles and guns, and will have at their disposal 120 machine guns and 45 armored vehicles. Some 310 officers and policemen will be allowed to enter the area at this stage.

Another 50 deportees, including 'Arafat's adviser 'Akram Haniyah, will be allowed to return to the territories within two days. Also, there will be a gradual and massive release of 5,000 prisoners. These will not include members of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and terrorists whose hands are tainted with blood.

Shahaq Holds News Conference

NC1204153794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1400 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (MENA)—Israeli Deputy Chief of Staff General Amnon Shahaq has described the session of talks with the Palestinian side that ended in Cairo today as "good."

In a news conference today, Shahaq said several topics were discussed in this session, including security matters upon which an agreement is now very close. He noted that some issues within the framework of the Security Committee have not yet been resolved, saying: We will resume the negotiations in Cairo next week to continue discussing these issues.

Shahaq, head of the Israeli delegation to the negotiations with the Palestinians, said agreement was reached with the Palestinian side to postpone some issues until after signing the executive agreement on Gaza and Jericho on the condition that negotiations on these points will be resumed after the signing.

On issues that are still under discussion between the two sides, he said issues concerning the Palestinian legal jurisdiction in civil affairs, as well as other matters, have not yet been discussed. He affirmed that agreement on security corridors and water will be reached before signing the accord and that the antiquities question has actually been resolved.

As for taxes, he said: We are waiting for an agreement to be reached by the economic committee, currently in session in Paris. Agreement is expected to be reached on fiscal jurisdiction before signing the accord.

He explained that there will not be more than five or six issues that will be deferred until an accord is signed; most of them are civil affairs and some may be related to civil affairs that are linked to security aspects.

He said that agreement was also reached on the size of the Palestinian police force, the total number of which will be 9,000; 2,000 from inside Gaza and Jericho and 7,000 from abroad.

He added that 6,000 of the Palestinian policemen who will come from abroad will enter Gaza and Jericho directly after the signing of the "executive agreement" and the other 1,000 will enter three months after the agreement is signed.

As for the security measures inside Gaza and Jericho, he said, we are very close to reaching an agreement on them. He expressed hope that the negotiations will be completed within a few weeks; otherwise, they will encounter difficulties, as has been happening since the start of the talks.

Commenting on the Palestinian detainees, Shahaq said the Israeli side explained to the Palestinians everything about the detainees who will be released, to what factions they belong, and when the release will take place. He added: We will not allow the release of detainees from the Hamas movement, because they are against peace and their leaders and representatives in Amman had announced their responsibility for the recent 'Afula incident in northern Israel. He went on: Also, those who have carried out operations after 13 September, the date when the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles was signed, and those responsible for operations in which Israelis were killed will not be released. He noted that this issue will not be discussed further.

Concluding his news conference, Shahaq said: The negotiations were hindered in the past not because of us but because of many other reasons and we have to complete the negotiations as quickly as possible.

Sha'th on Outcome of Negotiations

NC1204155594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1445 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (MENA)—Dr. Nabil Sha'th, head of the Palestinian delegation to the peace negotiations, declared that the Palestinian and Israeli sides have reached agreement on the size of the Palestinian police force in the Gaza Strip and Jericho area during the round of negotiations that ended in Cairo today.

Speaking at a news conference today at the conclusion of the negotiations, Sha'th said that the police force agreed upon will comprise 9,000 personnel; 2,000 from inside [the occupied territories] and 7,000 from outside.

He added that the agreement stipulates that 6,000 Palestinian policemen will enter immediately after the signing of the executive agreement of the Gaza-Jericho First agreement and then another 1,000 will enter within three months of the signing of the agreement. [passage indistinct]

Sha'th went on to say: As to the weapons of the 9,000 Palestinian policemen, they will be modern automatic rifles for policemen, and officers will also be issued pistols. He said that the Palestinian police will be supplied with a number of machine guns and some armored personnel carriers.

Regarding the issues on which no agreement has been reached so far, Sha'th said that these are: roads; the crossing points between Gaza, Jericho and Israel; joint patrols; the security measures on the roads; how to deal with any military operation; wrapping up the water issue. He added that these issues will be referred to the round that will be held in Cairo on 17 April.

On what Amnon Shahaq, head of the Israeli delegation, said in his news conference today, that Palestinian detainees who are members of Hamas will not be released, Sha'th said that the Palestinian side in the negotiations represents all the Palestinian people and it is its responsibility to negotiate to release all the detainees and not only the Fatah ones.

He added: I know that there is some sensitivity on the Israeli side, especially after the recent 'Afula incident in northern Israel. However, agreement was reached today to release 5,000 detainees and negotiations will be conducted to release the others. He stressed that the negotiations are being held in the name of the entire Palestinian people.

He went on to say: We are not negotiating for some detainees and not others. The peace we want to conclude is a peace between the entire Palestinian people and the entire Israeli people and not a peace between a Palestinian organization and an Israeli one. He said: We must shoulder the responsibility for an agreement on a general amnesty that will lead to the release of all the detainees. Sha'th underlined the Palestinian side's determination to continue the negotiations to release all the detainees so that a real peace can be achieved, one which halts the conflict that has lasted for a long time and of which the detainees constitute a part.

Shahaq Departs

NC1204173894 Cairo MENA in English 1600 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, April 12 (MENA)—General Amnon Shahaq, Israeli deputy chief of staff and leader of the Israeli delegation to the Palestinian Israeli peace negotiations, left here today for home. The Palestinian-Israeli talks wound up here today.

Further on Agreements

TA1204102194

[Editorial Report] Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew on 12 April, in a page 4 report by Moti Bassok on the Cairo talks, reports that "significant progress was made yesterday on a series of security, civilian, and military issues. Political sources in Jerusalem assessed yesterday that the agreement on the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho will be signed by the end of the month. Two days after that, Israel will release 2,500 Palestinian prisoners."

Basok reports that "a timetable for the Israeli withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho following the signing of the agreement was determined yesterday. Other things decided were a timetable for the release of Palestinian prisoners and the deployment dates for the Palestinian police force. Progress was also achieved on the issues of control of water resources, security in Gaza's naval zone, and control over the Gaza Strip and Jericho airspace. Most issues pertaining to judicial powers were also resolved."

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 12 April on pages 1 and 19 carries a report by No'omi Levitzky saying that "the substantial entry of Palestinian policemen to the Gaza Strip and Jericho will start in early May. The force will number 9,000 policemen: 2,000 from the territories and 7,000 from abroad. The deployment of the policemen in Gaza and Jericho will be completed by the end of May. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] withdrawal will proceed at the same time and will be completed three weeks after the agreement is signed.

"The IDF withdrawal timetable at this stage looks as follows: During the first week after the agreement is signed, the IDF will withdraw from Rafah and Jericho. During the second week, it will pull out of Khan Yunus, and in the third week, it will leave Gaza and the northern part of the Strip. The body in charge of managing the autonomy will settle in Jericho during the first week after the agreement is signed."

Quray' Comments on Seventh Round Talks in Paris

JN1204193594 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Interview with Ahmad Quray,' head of the Palestinian delegation to the economic talks with Israel, by radio correspondent Salim Badawi in Paris on 11 April—recorded]

[Text] [Quray'] During this round of talks, we reached an agreement on three issues. The first issue is related to agriculture. In addition to organizing the relationship between the two parties, the agreement has opened, for the first time, the Israeli market for Palestinian agricultural products, such as vegetables and fruits. The Israeli market was completely closed before to Palestinian products. This is one of the papers that was accomplished.

The second paper deals with industry. This paper has defined the requirements for developing Palestinian industry and the relationship between the two parties. The paper even deals with the issue of standards and our commitment to these standards. Since Israel already has very rigid standards, we will not try at first to follow their standards, but we hope that in the future we will have our own firm industrial standards.

The third paper deals with energy. In this paper, we insist on pricing all oil products in accordance with the income of our Palestinian people. Although they insisted on one price for gasoline, it was agreed to allow a difference of 15 percent between the prices of fuel in the West Bank and Gaza and the prices of fuel in Israel.

Therefore, I believe that all these papers are good because—although they did not meet all the demands—they met some of the most important Palestinian aspirations to lay down the bases for an economic system that can survive and develop.

[Badawi] Brother Abu-al-'Ala' [Quray' nom de guerre]: The self-rule agreement has not yet been implemented although 13 April is very close. What is the major obstacle in your view, and what do you expect to happen in the future? Rabin said the agreement on self-rule will not be reached before the first half of next month.

[Quray'] I do not want to anticipate things or deal with the causes. There is no doubt they shoulder the major responsibility for not accomplishing the accord on the set date, despite the great importance of respecting the dates stipulated by the accord—I am talking in particular about the date 13 April—which means real implementation of the accord on the ground in terms of withdrawal, the return of Palestinian leaders, and the presence of Palestinian security and police on the ground. This should have been respected by them as well as by us. Regrettably, this date has not been met. However, I can say that the current round of talks in Cairo and the economic talks being held here will help expedite the implementation of this accord. I am optimistic that the Gaza-Jericho accord will be accomplished before the end of this month, within two weeks, or even less than this.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Chief Criticizes Israel for Delaying Implementation

NC1204194794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1545 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Excerpt] Beirut, 12 Apr (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has criticized Israel's lack of commitment to implementing the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles and withdrawing from Gaza and Jericho on the date set for doing so, that is, 13 April.

In an exclusive statement to MENA in Beirut, he said that this Israeli reasoning is unacceptable and Israel has to respect the agreement and withdraw on the dates set down in the agreement.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid rejected the Israeli claims that these dates are not sacred, adding: Otherwise, why would the agreement mention them? No Arab negotiator can accept this. He stressed that the dates are sacred and must be respected.

The Arab League secretary general said that Israel's noncompliance with these agreements will affect the Washington negotiations. He expressed fear that Israel would lose its credibility in the agreements that it will conclude. He stressed the need to continue the peace negotiations despite the difficulties, adding that the continuation of the negotiations is necessary to restore our legitimate rights. He also stressed that peace is not a gift from Israel to the Arab countries and that the peace being asked from the Arab countries is also asked from Israel, which will benefit more from it; this imposes on it commitments that it must implement and respect.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid called on the Security Council to be fair in implementing its resolutions and not to have double standards when it comes to implementing the resolutions that represent international legitimacy and which include Resolution 425, which demands an unconditional Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon.

On the future of his own initiative to bring about Arab reconciliation, the Arab League secretary general said: The Arab countries must get together in solidarity to unite ranks and positions. He noted that his initiative aimed at achieving Arab solidarity based on a common basis despite the differences among some Arab countries.

He added: I stressed in my initiative that we should be frank before we have reconciliation. This does not mean that we should forget the past as if nothing had happened but whoever did wrong must rectify his error so that we

can turn over a new leaf that will achieve unity in the Arab destiny. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

'Arafat Condemns Attack on Israelis in Hadera

AU1304110094 Paris AFP in English 1038 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Strasbourg, April 13 (AFP)—PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat Wednesday [13 April] condemned attacks against "innocent Israelis" in a speech to the European Parliament here, after six people were killed in a bomb attack.

He was talking after learning that a bomb had exploded on a bus at station north of Tel Aviv, killing six Israelis and injuring 21 others.

Arafat said: "These attacks are just targeting innocent people on both sides, Israelis and Palestinians, and do nothing but strike at the heart of the peace process."

"All extremist forces on both sides, Israeli and Palestinian, have thrown themselves into a kind of escalation which cannot be halted."

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas claimed responsibility for the attack saying it was the second of five planned to avenge February's mosque massacre in Hebron.

Police spokesman Arik Ben Chen told AFP the bomb exploded near the back door of the Afula to Tel Aviv bus at Hadera, 45 kilometres (27 miles) north of Tel Aviv. The attack happened on Israel's memorial day for its fallen soldiers.

'Arafat Interviewed on Jordan Visit, Jerusalem

JN1204200894 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 13 Apr 94 p 4

[Report on an "exclusive" interview with PLO Executive Committee Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by the AL-BILAD political editor in Amman; date not given]

[Text] Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], why are you here in Amman? I mean what is your agenda here in Jordan? I addressed this apparently provocative question to the Palestinian president, who came to Amman on a short working visit of less than 24 hours. He answered: I am always here. I got used to traveling. I am here in Amman based on a mutual desire on my part and on the part of His Majesty King Husayn. Hakam Bal'awi was told this when he visited Amman last week with a message from the Palestinian leadership.

I said: The press reported that Bal'awi's visit was a failure.

He replied: The press is hallucinating. Did you not hear brother Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali's reply to the reporters who said Bal'awi's visit was unsuccessful? It was a successful visit crowned by his majesty's meeting with the Palestinian envoy. The envoy explained our view toward insisting on raising the question of Jerusalem within the context, and at the heart, of Security Council Resolution 904. Jordan has shown understanding of our position despite its previous reservations. I must note here King Husayn's efforts by contacting several Arab kings and presidents and President Clinton regarding this question to contain any complications. After all, we are working for the same cause. It is true that Jerusalem is the capital of Palestine. But it is also of interest to Arabs, Muslims, and Christians, since it is the cradle of Jesus Christ, the first of the two prayer directions, the third holiest shrine, and the destination of Prophet Muhammad's nocturnal journey. As King Husayn always says, there can be no peace without Jerusalem. It is the gate of peace. We will not and cannot abandon it. There is no one on earth who would bargain over Jerusalem.

[AL-BILAD] What was the result of your visit to Amman?

['Arafat] Success, understanding, and continuation of our joint march in order to achieve what we are seeking. I agreed with King Husayn and the prime minister to intensify consultations and devise a better mechanism for our contacts.

[AL-BILAD] But the Jordanians and Palestinians this unfruitful formula of coordination, which is apparently inefficient. [sentence as published] This is clear in the differences in views that emerge.

['Arafat] Our journey is long and we must have endurance, only impatient people get bored. I want to say that our cause is complex and is affected, more than other issues, by local, regional, and international factors. This is why our tactics appear to be contradictory. This might be true. However, the results we seek to achieve are the same—removing the occupation and the return of security and stability to our region. This will happen after the Palestinian people, just like their brothers, secure their independence and freedom and establish their independent state. This state will have a special, equal relationship with Jordan to be defined by the two brotherly peoples through their legislative institutions or through a public referendum. This is what we are seeking. Anything said otherwise is merely conjecture.

[AL-BILAD] It is said that you want relations with Egypt that are stronger than relations with any other country.

['Arafat] Why not? Egypt is an Arab country that has weight and influence, but this should not be at the expense of our relations with anyone else. Cairo today is a crossing point and mechanism [for implementing the Oslo agreement], and it has strong relations with Israel, the U.S. sponsor, and other parties, in addition to its role and status, so I have to benefit from it and from its role, which it is playing in the best manner.

I said to President 'Arafat: But there are some flaws in coordination with Jordan.

He replied by saying: This may be true, but it is not deliberate. The quick developments, the interlinking of courses and interests, and an important factor that we should not overlook—the interference of third parties that have no interest in the Jordanian-Palestinian relations and understanding—all contribute. This is seen in the press in Jordan and abroad. For example the visit to Jordan by Hakam Bal'awi. Published reports indicated that the visit was a failure although this was incorrect. So, in whose interest are such inaccurate reports published? I think you published reports that are different from what the others did.

I interrupted the president and said: Does this mean that you are acquainted with what AL-BILAD published?

He replied: Of course, I do not miss anything, including slander and charges of treason. I reply to those who make such charges by saying: O God forgive some of my people because they do not know, but some others, as I know, have motives, and a third group has motives for which they are paid.

Jordan, my brother, is a country that is unfairly treated, and I know the size of the pressure employed against it. Even wide sectors of Jordanians do not know the size of the pressure and temptations. When King Husayn was in Washington, they offered him billions to accept a peace treaty with Israel, but he refused. He is paying the price—the price of his faith and principled position.

[[AL-BILAD] Are you optimistic about the future?

['Arafat] I have no doubts about the future. I am a faithful man and I learned politics from history. As you know, history has a price, and he who studies the history of our people knows that our people have paid a high price represented in the best of their sons and leaders. The result of their sacrifices is the Israeli acceptance of the principle of withdrawal and settlement. Look around you. Everything is in Israel's favor: The international and Arab situation, the balance of power, and the sieges imposed upon us. All these things serve the objective of Grater Israel on all of Palestinian territories, but what happened changed that. Today we are restoring what we lost yesterday. We are not to blame for what we lost. There are several factors that forces these options. We are stubborn people and cannot relax until the occupation is over and until our people get their full rights to freedom and independence. God willing, this will be realized in stages.

At this point, the interview, which was interrupted several times, came to an end. President 'Arafat promised us of another broader and more comprehensive interview in spite of his reservations as a result of AL-BILAD's hostile attitude toward the Palestinian leadership as he put it.

We in AL-BILAD emphasize that there is no hostile attitude toward the Palestinian leadership. Our motives are the public interest and our respect for the profession, nothing more.

'Arafat Receives Message From Russian Leadership

LD1204174194 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Brother Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat], president of the state of Palestine received a message from the Russian leadership concerning the current contacts and negotiations to implement the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

Brother president Abu-'Ammar received the message yesterday evening when he received Mr. Boris Shchiborin, Russian ambassador to Tunisia. During the meeting, brother president Abu-'Ammar informed the Russian ambassador of the latest developments concerning the Palestinian issue.

'Arafat Receives Japanese Ambassador to Tunisia

LD1204175894 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Brother president Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] received at noon today Mr. Harashima, Japanese ambassador to Tunisia.

During the meeting, the latest developments concerning the peace process, the current negotiations in Cairo regarding the implementation of Gaza-Jericho accord, and the implementation of the Security Council's Resolution 904 concerning the protection of the Palestinian people under occupation were discussed.

Brother President Abu-'Ammar also briefed the Japanese ambassador on the obstacles created by the Israeli Government and its evasion from the commitment to implement the withdrawal from Gaza and Jericho at the fixed dates.

PLO, Egypt Said To Sign Security Agreement

TA1204164694 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 11 Apr 94 p 19

[By Amjad al-'Umari and Zaki Abu-al-Halawah]

[Text] Cairo—Informed Egyptian sources have said that a security agreement on cooperation and coordination between Egypt and the PLO will be signed in Cairo within days.

The sources said that Hasan al-Alfi, the Egyptian interior minister, and Amin al-Hindi, head of the Palestinian intelligence service, will sign an agreement to enhance cooperation in security and the exchange of information. Moreover, Egypt is to provide training and technical

assistance to the Palestinian police force that will be transferred to the Gaza Strip via Egypt.

According to the same sources, al-Hindi presented the draft agreement to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat last week for approval.

Senior Egyptian and Palestinian security officials are currently holding joint meetings to discuss security cooperation during the coming period.

Fatah, Hamas Speak of 'Breakthrough' in Relations

TA1304093894 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Both Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and Fatah speak of a breakthrough achieved in a series of meetings between the two organizations' senior officials, and there is now talk of mutual respect and of an imminent agreement between the two organizations.

The most recent meeting was held five days ago. A senior Hamas official, who wished to remain anonymous, said his organization will seek to participate in all Palestinian institutions, such as health and education bodies, provided it is granted a fair slice in the future Gaza Strip rule.

A Fatah source has also confirmed the meeting, saying that his organization intended to permit Hamas to take an active part in the process, alongside Fatah, in a bid to solve together the Palestinian population's everyday problems. At the meetings, Hamas representatives expressed a desire to take part in the Palestinian police, when one is established. They are our brethren, a Hamas source said, and we will cooperate with them in a bid to ensure the Palestinian people's safety, and we are certainly not against participating in the Palestinian police force. The source added that Hamas welcomes the recently returned Gaza Strip deportees.

Another important decision made at the last meeting was that more meetings should be held to permit a discussion of various vital issues. A date for one such meeting was set for the next few days.

The rumors about the Fatah-Hamas meetings have generated great excitement in the Strip. The headline of yesterday's AL-QUDS, one of the leading newspapers in the territories, pronounced: Numerous Reactions to Fatah-Hamas Dialogue. The Strip residents now hope that with the autonomy implementation, they will be able to attend to all their affairs as one united front.

Further on Hamas-PLO Cooperation

NC1204184694 Paris AFP in English 1523 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Gaza City, Occupied Gaza Strip, April 12 (AFP)—The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas, which has opposed the peace process, is prepared to cooperate with the PLO in the police force and other public services, a source close to the group said Tuesday [12 April].

Meanwhile, Israeli troops detained 30 to 40 suspected Hamas members in the al-Shati' refugee camp and neighbouring Gaza City on Monday night, Palestinian witnesses said.

The swoop came after the army announced the arrest of a local leader of the fundamentalist group in Jabaliya refugee camp.

Hamas has so far bitterly opposed the peace accord with Israel and criticized the Palestine Liberation Organization for accepting it.

But, the two groups held talks last week to settle their disputes.

"Our national and religious duties force us to stand united," said Ahmad Bahr, who has links with Hamas.

Hamas could join in the police force, provided the PLO agreed.

"In any case, we will consider the Palestinian police as our brothers, we will be soldiers to them and protect them.

"We do not oppose our brothers in the police force," said Bahr, who was deported by Israel in 1992 as a Hamas suspect and returned to Gaza three months ago.

A 9,000-strong Palestinian police force selected by the PLO is due to be deployed in the Gaza Strip and West Bank town of Jericho to maintain order during autonomy.

"We will unite in all fields with Fatah, except in negotiations with Israel," Bahr said, explaining that Hamas would cooperate in education, health and public services.

Rashid Abu-Shbak, a Fatah official in Gaza, said he welcomed the idea of HAMAS cooperation. He did not comment specifically on the possibility of Hamas joining the police force.

"We want to start a new page based on respect between the two groups," said Abu-Shbak who is in charge of taking over buildings vacated by Israelis under the autonomy deal.

A Palestinian research centre last month found that 40 percent of the Gaza Strip would vote in elections for PLO chairman Yasir 'Arafat's Fatah movement and nearly 20 percent for Hamas.

New Group Claims Responsibility for Anti-Israeli Attacks

JN1104204694 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1706 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Statement issued by the al-Ibrahimi Mosque Martyrs Group of the PFLP-GC; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate. Salute of the armed struggle, the only way to liberate Palestine; salute of the blessed intifadah, which forged the most splendid feats of struggle; salute from the honorable ones to other honorable ones: We in the group of the holy al-Ibrahimi Mosque Martyrs [majmu'at shuhada' al-haram al-ibrahimi]-the Janin area claim responsibility for the following armed intifadah operations against enemy patrols:

—Throwing a hand grenade at the entrance of Qabatiyah on 3 April 1994.

—Throwing a hand grenade at the martyrs' triangle [muthallath al-shuhada'] on 8 April 1994. Enemy troops opened fire in a hysterical way. They also fired flares, closed the roads, and began a large-scale search for those who carried out the two operations, who returned safely to base.

We pledge to our heroic people to be the faithful ones in our struggle to liberate all Palestine and also to proceed on the path of martyrs. It is a continuous intifadah until the land and man are liberated.

[Signed] Your brothers in the group of the al-Ibrahimi Mosque Martyrs, PFLP-GC

PFLP-GC Issues 29th Anniversary Statement

JN1204073194 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Statement by the PFLP-GC on its 29th anniversary—date not given]

[Excerpts] Masses of our militant Palestinian people, today, we celebrate the 29th anniversary of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command's [PFLP-GC]. As this takes place, our Palestinian people continue to record, with Palestinian blood, their historical struggle against the unjust Zionist enemy. Meanwhile, most parties conspire with the Zionist enemy against them and sit at the same table with the enemy.

'Arafat's distant command over past years has been hostile to the national movement. 'Arafat had even chosen to stand in the trench of our people's enemies and to conspire against them. [passage omitted]

Our militant masses, we in the PFLP-GC, from a position of responsibility, call on all the sectors of our people who are concerned over their homeland to carry out the following duties:

1. Reject all the defeatist plans submitted by Yasir 'Arafat;
2. Ignore differences that could hamper our militant march;
3. Escalate the Palestinian intifadah with the intensity that we saw during the militant days following the Hebron massacre;
4. Escalate the national armed struggle as it is the road to liberate Palestine from the river to the ocean;
5. Be wary of yellow journalism that squirts out venom against Palestinians who oppose the defeatist agreements;
6. Reject the autonomy conspiracy embodied in the Gaza-Jericho agreement, and confront it;
7. Enhance the sense of national belonging within Palestinian frameworks.

Let the 29th anniversary of the PFLP-GC's establishment on 11 April be a day when we renew the pledge to our martyrs, wounded, and detained, and a day of confrontation against the Zionist occupation forces. Let us make of this day a day of sweeping wrath against the traitor defeatists in the Palestinian arena.

We promise our people and our martyrs that we will continue to fight the Zionists and to avenge their pure blood that has saturated the soil of Palestine. It is a promise we make to Hebron and Gaza to avenge our martyrs who fell while defending the soil of Palestine. We promise our front to remain loyal soldiers until the land of Palestine is cleansed of occupation and the Palestinian state is established on all Palestinian national soil, with Arab Jerusalem, the Jerusalem of Muslims and Arabs, as its capital.

It is revolution until the liberation of land and man.

[Signed] The PFLP-GC

PFLP-GC Buries 4 'Martyrs' of Lebanon Operation

JN1204180194 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Excerpts] The Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command [PFLP-GC] has escorted to their final resting place the martyrs of the heroic al-'Ayshiyah battle, which the front's fedayeen carried out against the Zionist enemy forces and their agents in southern Lebanon. These heroic martyrs fell after they killed more than 15 of the U.S.-Zionist enemy troops and their agents in a direct battle that came in response to the Ibrahimi Mosque massacre. Having carried out their combat mission, our heroes were targeted by enemy artillery and air raids while they were returning to their bases. Other members of the group managed to return safely to base.

Heroic martyr Khalid Muhmmad Hilal, also known as Abu-Sakhr; heroic martyr Muhammad Mahmud al-Nu'aymi, also known as Abu-Iskandar 'Umar; and heroic martyr Ahmad Nasr Ibrahim, also known as Abu-Iskandar Ahmad, were laid to rest at the Martyrs Cemetery at the al-Yarmuk Camp [near Damascus] this afternoon. The funeral procession was led by Ahmad Jibril, PFLP-GC secretary general; Talal Naji, PFLP-GC assistant secretary general; Fadl Shururu, secretary of the PFLP-GC Political Bureau; and 'Umar al-Shihabi, member of the PFLP-GC Political Bureau. Also leading the funeral were a number of representatives of the Alliance of Palestinian Forces, the martyrs' relatives, a number of the PFLP-GC Central Committee members, and a large crowd of the masses of our Palestinian and Syrian Arab people. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, in a funeral unprecedented since 1982, the body of the heroic martyr 'Awni Muhammad Manna', also known as Abu-Nasir, the commander of the heroic al-'Ayshiyah operation, was laid to rest at the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp following the noon prayers yesterday, Monday. [passage omitted]

Our correspondent in southern Lebanon reports that in an attempt to disrupt the funeral, members of the 'Arafat clique assassinated a member of their own clique. However, this did not prevent the masses of our people from continuing participation in the funeral of heroic martyr Abu-Nasir.

DFLP Demands 'Free' Municipal Council Elections

TA1204164594 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 11 Apr 94 p 3

[By Nasir al-Rimawi]

[Text] Ramallah—The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine [DFLP] has called for the holding of free and democratic municipal council elections. It also called for rejecting the principle of appointments.

In a statement distributed yesterday in Ramallah, the DFLP warned against the municipalities' assumption of political tasks, as in Hebron. The statement emphasized the need for municipalities to fulfill their role in serving the residents, far from the Oslo accord. It said that no one has the right to use the municipalities for political purposes.

The statement renewed the demand to hold comprehensive elections for all municipalities. It considers the lack of response to the demand for elections as an indication of the dictatorship of the coming authority, which our people will not allow.

The statement said that the Israeli consent to reinstate the Hebron municipal council members, who were elected 18 years ago, was a bribe. The Israeli authorities have refused and are refusing to collectively reinstate the elected municipal councils, which is a popular Palestinian demand.

The statement sharply criticized what it called "the new concessions," namely; having the settlers remain in the heart of Hebron and in all the occupied territories, giving up the demand for international protection for our defenseless people, and sufficing with a weak multinational observers' presence as a substitute to the international protection stipulated by the Security Council.

Amman PLO Embassy Denies Dollar Forgery Report

JN1204120994 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 12 Apr 94 p 24

[Text] SAWT AL-SHA'B has received the following letter from the embassy of Palestine in Amman:

The Editor:

SAWT AL-SHA'B, on Sunday, 10 April, 1994, published a report about five of 'Arafat's companions being involved in a dollar forging operation, etc.

We would like to state that the report has no basis in truth and must have been fabricated by a sick mind in the context of a wicked effort steered by circles hostile to the PLO and its leadership.

We would like to make it clear that any actions prejudicial to the brotherly ties between the brother Tunisian and Palestinian peoples are the responsibility of the PLO's security services, in conjunction with brother Tunisians. Any practices that may discredit the PLO or abuse brother Tunisia's hospitality are handled in the same fashion.

Commentary: Palestinian 'Patience Has Its Limits'

JN1204103594 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1600 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Text] Brothers, it is no longer a secret that Israel's intransigence has become manifest in blocking the peace process in the Middle East. It will not come to the rescue of the occupation and its leaders. This intransigence will inevitably lead them to perdition. It seems the occupation and its leaders do not yet understand that their foolhardy actions will kill the peace process in the region and wipe out any future aspirations for peace. This will open the doors to war and violence.

They are mistaken to believe that by wasting time and avoiding commitment to the schedule for the implementation of the Declaration of Principles—which is the only historical opportunity for establishing just and comprehensive peace in the region—they can succeed in finding a way to undermine the Palestinian national struggle and obstruct the PLO's political bodies. If we reach a dead end, our steadfast and lofty people, with

their nationalist and brave leadership, will submit new options. Then, and only then will the occupation and its leaders realize that they are the only party that is responsible for wasting the historic opportunity for establishing just and comprehensive peace in the region.

It is true that we are patient, and that we work for a just and comprehensive peace. However, our patience has its limits. The occupation and its leaders will be the losers. As for our people, who continue to sacrifice their sons, they will ultimately attain their just and legitimate objectives of freedom, independence, and life. The occupation and its leaders should always keep in mind the conspicuous fact that victory is the lot of our people and that defeat and loss is for the occupation and its leaders.

Paper Urges Israel To Accelerate Peace Talks

TA1304071194 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 11 Apr 94 p 2

[Editorial: "Realization of Peace Is the Response to Violence"]

[Text] The mutual acts of violence in the arena of struggle are making the situation worse and more complicated and are casting a dark shadow on the stalled negotiating process.

These acts will not cease as long as the negotiating process does not achieve practical results on the ground. The Oslo accord set 13 April as the date for ending the occupation in Gaza and Jericho as the first step toward beginning talks over a final settlement. Evidence and facts indicate, however, that this date will pass without the realization of a practical achievement. Consequently, the cycle of violence will remain and bloodshed will continue. This is something which we do not desire, but condemnation and precautionary measures are insufficient and will not stop acts of violence. The only way to do that is by advancing in the negotiating process and understanding the facts of the struggle. Delay in reaching agreements on implementing the accord will leave the door open for mutual acts of violence that we have always hoped will stop.

Israel is called upon to seriously accelerate the negotiating process, adhere to what it signed in Washington and Cairo, refrain from engaging in procedural matters, and move toward the achievement of practical steps leading to peace and stability, so that calm will prevail and violence will end forever.

We strongly condemn acts of violence regardless of the party that perpetrates them and look forward to the moment in which the foundations of peace and stability are laid down.

Editorial Warns Israel Against 'Foot-Dragging'

TA1304111094 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 11 Apr 94 pp 3, 7

[Editorial: "A Hopeless Israeli Maneuver"]

[Excerpts] At a time when the Palestinians are doing all in their power to conclude the negotiations on implementing the Gaza-Jericho First accord and are being subjected to immense pressure by various parties to make concessions to Israel, so much so that they have nothing more to concede, the Palestinian people in the occupied territories are being subjected to a different kind of pressure. Israel has arbitrarily imposed blockades and an economic siege on them. This situation has alienated the people and the leadership from the accord and implementation. Clearly, by this policy, Israel wants to create a rift between the leadership and the people. If pressure on the people in the occupied territories is coupled with concessions by the negotiators abroad, the result will be—or so Israel thinks—that trust between the inside and outside will be shaken. If this is the aim of the multipronged offensive, Israel and the United States will discover that this policy will fail because the Palestinians, who have been burned by the fire of repeated offensives, know how to wage these battles. This policy will not succeed in paralyzing the Palestinians' power of confrontation. [passage omitted]

Israel has repeatedly tried to avoid dealing with the PLO to no avail. Ultimately, it was forced to conclude the Oslo accord with the PLO. Has Israel returned to its old attempts to confuse the Palestinians and raise doubts about the Palestinian people's real address? As if they can find another address to peddle their schemes and avoid commitment to the Oslo accord's clauses, or at best to implement the accord in accordance with the Israeli interpretation. Israel fails to realize that all these attempts are doomed to failure. It would be better for Israel to accelerate implementation of the peace process in a way that responds to legitimate Palestinian demands. This is the only way to prevent the deterioration of the situation and stop acts of violence from both sides.

The situation cannot endure maneuvering and foot-dragging. Israel might be thinking that time is on its side. This may be so in the short-term, but over the long-term Israel will realize that it has lost a golden opportunity for achieving a settlement with the Palestinians. If Israel is betting on fragmenting the Palestinian people's national fabric, this is not in its interest because it will have to return to square one, namely, to the cycles of the conflict from the beginning. If today Israel is rejecting the Palestinian address, in the future it will find not one but several addresses for negotiations—one more radical than the other.

Editorial Examines Territories' Closure, Talks

TA1204190894 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 11 Apr 94 p 11

[Editorial: "The Peaceful Siege"]

[Text] The only haste that we, the Palestinians, are sensing from Israel is in placing further measures and restrictions while remaining oblivious to the damage being inflicted on our various sectors, especially the workers, who have been deprived of the source of their livelihood.

In contrast to the haste in restricting us, we are witnessing a slow down in the Palestinian-Israeli rounds of talks aimed at working out the arrangements for implementing the self-rule plan on the basis of the Oslo accord. Because there have been so many rounds, we are no longer counting them, nor do we know their exact number, or when will they end and for how long will they continue, especially after the sanctity of dates has been ignored. The Israeli side is keen on engaging in endless squabbling over the details and formalities and in Byzantine discussions, allowing this land that is thirsting for peace to be a fertile ground for tensions and explosions.

Irrespective of how long the security siege continues, it will not achieve security, safety, and stability for anyone in this region, which in fact needs a peaceful siege before which the shackles of sieges and military closures break down. The Palestinian people, who are being subjected to the most powerful pressures and to warfare in obtaining their livelihood, have not lost their faith in the inevitable victory of a just peace; the realization of their legitimate rights; liberation from dependency in the political and economic spheres; and the formulation of a sound basis for an infrastructure over their land. These people are determined to cling to and persevere on this land regardless of the storms raging now and then.

The important thing is that we must not allow frustration to penetrate into our ranks, and we should always remember that the darkest nights are followed by the light of dawn.

Finally, if we really want to safeguard our expected independence, we must build an integral economy and launch investment projects that ensure the absorption of our laborers; secure for them a decent life; spare them the need of working inside the Green Line; and keep them on our green land.

Algeria

FLN 'Not Concerned' With Provisional Council Creation

LD1204200494 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] The National Liberation Front [FLN] party is one which believes in dialogue and national reconciliation. In response to an invitation from Mr. Youcef el-Khatib, adviser at the presidency, to attend a meeting on the appointment of provisional council members on 20 April, the FLN said that it would not attend this meeting because it was not concerned with the council's formation. The FLN did not attend the national consensus conference and therefore was under no obligation to implement the conference's resolutions.

Courts Issue Jail, Death Sentences to Armed Groups

LD1204133194 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] The Oran special judicial council this morning handed down its final verdict in the case of the 10 people implicated in the establishment of an armed group. Here is a report on the matter from our Oran studio.

[Unidentified reporter] The sentences were as follows: 20 years in jail for one person, 15 years in jail for one person, 20 years in jail for another person, three years in jail for three people, one year in jail for one person, and two people acquitted.

Last Saturday the Oran special judicial council handed down several sentences varying from death to jail sentences against an armed group implicated in several assassination operations. It also condemned to death in absentia four persons implicated in the assassination of a policeman in Telagh, Sidi Bel Abbes Province. In another development, the Algiers special judicial council yesterday handed down six death sentences against the Emir Harik Noureddine group which consists of 13 persons—five of whom are on the run—while the rest of these defendants were sentenced to 10 and 8 years in jail.

For its part, the Constantine special judicial court handed down sentences varying from death to acquittal sentences in the case of two armed groups consisting of 37 people implicated in several assassinations, possession of, and trading in firearms.

Egypt

Envoy 'Optimistic' About Relations With Sudan

PM1304085894 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Apr 94 p 5

[Interview with Dr. Hasan Jad-al-Haqq, Egyptian ambassador to Sudan, by unidentified correspondent in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] After the meeting between the Egyptian and Sudanese foreign ministers, do you believe that the atmosphere is now favorable for resuming the Hala'ib committee's work? And will you work to hold this meeting in Khartoum?

[Jad-al-Haqq] An invitation has been sent to the Egyptian foreign minister from Dr. Abu-Salih to visit Khartoum. The visit will take place at the right time. Without doubt contacts are being made so that the visit can be made and the committee's work resumed. That was among the aims of my meeting with Minister 'Amr Musa.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Some people say that Musa is refusing to visit Khartoum while the present government is in power. What is your opinion?

[Jad-al-Haqq] That is not true at all. I stress that the foreign minister has accepted the invitation to visit Sudan, and he will make the visit at the right time, in view of his engagements and preoccupation in Cairo with following up the peace process and other issues.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Did you sense real seriousness from the two sides in tackling the problems and transcending the current phase of disputes which has occurred in relations in the recent period?

[Jad-al-Haqq] I am always optimistic about surmounting any differences or sudden problems between the two countries. These problems are not difficult to solve. No problem is difficult to solve as long as there are sincere intentions and as long as the efforts are intensified. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Do you believe it is possible for the two sides to backtrack on the measures taken before the tension arose in relations—both the measures taken by Sudan against the Egyptian education mission or the consulates, and those taken by Cairo against Hala'ib?

[Jad-al-Haqq] I can confirm that it is not in anyone's interests to harm relations between two fraternal peoples. Not only that: I also believe in our relationship with Sudan. It is a relationship of kinship. The people of Sudan are our kinfolk and relatives, and no one can sever the bond of kinship. We the present generation must safeguard this relationship. This generation in both Egypt and Sudan must safeguard what our ancestors achieved and cherished for us.

I can say that the unity of the Nile Valley and its people is the basis and foundation for the establishment, success, or continuation of any Arab unity or solidarity. Without doubt that is in the interests of the two fraternal peoples in Egypt and Sudan in view of the ties by which this region is characterized compared with other regions.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How would you assess conditions in southern Sudan, especially in the light of what

has been said about foreign endeavors and plans to separate it from the rest of the country and to establish a self-rule authority there?

[Jad-al-Haqq] I can confirm that there is no doubt about Egypt's foreign policy, as it is committed to safeguarding Sudan's unity, territorial integrity, and the unity of its people.

This is not limited to southern Sudan alone. It applies to all the Sudanese territory. It is a fixed and known position which stems from historic constants, namely commitment to safeguarding the territory and people of fraternal Sudan.

Not only does Egypt support Sudan, but also defends it against any attempts seeking to separate any part of Sudan's territory and fraternal people. [passage omitted]

President's Trip to Japan Postponed; Resignation Cited

NC1204124694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1126 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 12 Apr (MENA)—MENA has learned that President Husni Mubarak's visit to Japan, scheduled to take place on 18 April, was postponed due to the resignation of the Japanese Government and the consultations to form a new one. A new date for the visit will be determined. Mubarak will visit China on 21 April according to schedule.

Opposition Paper Criticizes NATO's 'Nondeterrent' Stance

NC1304071094 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Cairo, 13 Apr (MENA)—The newspaper AL-WAFD writes that the nondeterrent NATO strike against the Serbs allowed the Serbian reaction to be tyrannical and frightful. Using various types of weapons, the Serbian troops poured their wrath on the Muslims surrounded in Gorazde, the paper says.

In an editorial today, the mouthpiece of the opposition Wafd Party blames the UN Security Council for what is happening to the Bosnian Muslims, saying the UN resolutions lacked the necessary measures to deter the aggressors.

The paper expresses surprise at the stance by NATO, the owner of the biggest military force, which sent one plane once and two planes another time to attack Serbian positions.

It describes the American stance as insufficient, the international stance as feeble, and the Russian stance as odd, because it tolerates the slaughter of Muslims in Bosnia and threatens a fierce war if the air strikes against Serbs continue.

AL-WAFD notes that Russia's stance costs it the sympathy of the Third World, sympathy that it has gained over the years, because it is turning from a state that defends peace into a state that propagates war and the killing of innocent people.

Al-Minya's Islamic Group Ends 'Truce' With Security Forces

NC1204185594 Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 6 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by 'Abd-al-Rahim 'Ali]

[Text] Forty-five armed units from Tanta, al-Mansurah, and Alexandria and 16 armored vehicles have arrived in Asyut and six vehicles have arrived in al-Minya to strengthen the security measures against the escalation of the Islamic groups' activities in the two governorates.

In the first armed confrontation between the people and terrorism, the inhabitants of Manfalut exchanged fire with three terrorists who were on their way to hiding on al-Ma'abidah Island. The three terrorists—Khalid Quraysh, Muhammad 'Abd-al-'Al, and Sahsah al-Manfaluti—were killed.

In the ongoing struggle between the governor, the security organ, and the popular leaderships in the governorate, the latter are saying that the security organ has set up vigilante [al-matarid] groups and armed them with modern weapons to chase and kill the terrorists. They added that the Manfalut operation was the first one carried out by these groups.

The Islamic Group in al-Minya last Sunday distributed its first statement in four years. Masked youngsters carrying swords and axes distributed the statement which declared an end to the truce agreed on by the Islamic Group and the security forces. AL-AHALI had published on 26 December 1993 the agreement between the Islamic Group and the security organ in al-Minya and Suhaj. Sunday's statement warned that the Islamic Group will resume the struggle.

Licenses for Automatic Rifles in Asyut Rescinded

NC1204174394 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Asyut, Upper Egypt, 12 Apr (MENA)—A security source has announced that licenses for 15 automatic rifles that had formerly been issued to citizens in various towns and villages in Asyut Governorate have been rescinded.

The source said the measure is part of a license policy revision that aims to make the issuance of licenses more systematic.

Yemen

Prime Minister Leaves for 'Medical Treatment Abroad'

JN1204194294 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Prime Minister brother Haydar Abu-Bakr al-'Attas left Aden this evening for medical treatment abroad.

In Aden earlier today, the brother prime minister received Arthur Hughes, the U.S. ambassador to our country.

YSP Sources Deny Reports of Attack on Aden Governor

PM1204132494 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Apr 94 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Congress Confirms, Socialist Party Denies Attempt on Aden Governor Life"]

[Excerpt] Sanaa, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Sources close to Brigadier General Salih Munsir al-Siyayli, governor of Aden, yesterday denied recent reports of an attempt on his life during which he sustained serious injuries, prompting him to travel abroad, where he was admitted to an intensive care unit.

Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] sources have said that al-Siyayli is carrying out his duties and is available in his residence every evening with a number of his advisers in the governorate. Informed sources had confirmed the report about the injury of the Aden governor, who is the strongest YSP opponent to the General People's Congress' policy.

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT contacted al-Siyayli's house, and one of his aides said he was in the house holding a meeting with more than 30 people. He said that "if he had been subjected to any harm, the situation would have been different."

Sanaa sources linked these reports with Salih al-Siyayli's disappearance and failure to attend the meetings held over the past days by Vice President 'Ali Salim al-Bid. [passage omitted]

Official Comments on Solving Crisis, Ties With Iran

JN1304093894 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 13 Apr 94 p 29

[By Faysal Malkawi]

[Excerpts] Salim Salih Muhammad, member of the Yemeni Presidential Council and assistant secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party, has praised the distinguished Jordanian role aimed at reaching an appropriate formula to implement the Yemeni accord document which was signed in Amman last February. [passage omitted]

In an exclusive statement to AL-DUSTUR before leaving Amman yesterday, Salim Salih Muhammad said: We were informed that a high-level Jordanian political delegation has been formed and will be led by al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir, chief of the Royal Court. The delegation is expected to leave for Yemen within the next few days to meet with the Yemeni leadership within the framework of the Jordanian role aimed at upgrading political dialogue. [passage omitted]

Commenting on recent reports that Saudi forces had entered Yemeni territories in the Sa'dah Governorate, Muhammad said that this did occur and that joint committees were formed to discuss bilateral border issues. This is in addition to a message which President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih sent to King Fahd. He noted that all efforts are focused on solving these border problems as soon as possible.

On the Iranian role to solve the crisis, Muhammad said: The Iranian president last week received Yemeni Foreign Minister Muhammad Basindwah. We consider Iran a fraternal Islamic country and our relations with it are based on equality, mutual respect, and joint interests. According to Iranian confirmations, Iran is not biased toward any party in the Yemeni crisis. [passage omitted]

The member of the Yemeni Presidential Council explained: Yemen has a huge amount of weapons. This negates reports that some Yemeni parties are receiving weapons from outside. In this regard, he referred to the Yemeni interior minister's statement the day before yesterday that there are 50 million weapon pieces in Yemen; that is, four for every person. The member of the Presidential Council considered this a modest figure compared with the actual number of weapons in the hands of the Yemeni people. [passage omitted]

'Serious' Information Offered to U.S. on New York Bombing

JN1204184894 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1807 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] An official spokesman has stated the following:

The Iraqi intelligence services have acquired documented and serious information regarding the incident of the explosion at the World Trade Center in New York.

This information raises many suspicions about the parties that took part in or were behind the incident.

The competent Iraqi authorities are willing to cooperate with the United States to learn the facts as they exist. We hope that the U.S. side that handles this will be impartial. It is preferable that this should be done with the knowledge of the U.S. Congress or under its supervision.

Tariq 'Aziz Comments on Country's Steadfastness

JN1204133694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1235 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 12 Apr (INA)—Tariq 'Aziz, official in charge of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, today received Naji 'Allush, secretary general of the Arab Popular Liberation Movement.

Tariq 'Aziz stressed Iraq's adherence to pan-Arab principles and convictions. He said the steadfastness of the Iraqis has foiled all of the wagers of hostile powers. These powers sought to undermine Iraq and harm its people through their aggression, plots, and unjust blockade. 'Aziz added: We are confident that the next stage will be in the interest of nationalist and pan-Arab forces in the region.

Naji 'Allush paid tribute to the steadfastness and position of the Iraqis in the face of the aggression and the crime of the blockade. He asserted that Iraq is the hope of the Arab nation, the base of steadfastness, and a symbol of awakening and progress.

The meeting was attended by comrade Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, member of the Foreign Relations Bureau and secretary general of the Arab Popular Conference, and Salah Khalil, member of the Executive Committee of the Arab Popular Liberation Movement.

Ramadan Urges France To Play 'Prominent Role'

JN1204181194 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Vice President Taha Yasin Ramadan has received Ahmad Shakir, head of the Society for the Promotion of Arab-French Ties, and his accompanying delegation.

Taha Yasin Ramadan said France should play a prominent and positive role in the current stage to help reestablish normal ties with Iraq and end the unjust embargo against it.

He added that the creative achievements of the Iraqi people and the strugglers during the reconstruction drive—including development and strategic projects in all fields accomplished with Iraqi capabilities and raw materials—are the best evidence of the Iraq's cohesion and support for the leadership of President Saddam Husayn [words indistinct] continue to resist aggressive schemes [words indistinct].

Ahmad Shakir paid tribute to the Iraqi people's courageous stand under the leadership of struggler President Saddam Husayn in confronting the 30-state aggression and its episodes.

The meeting was attended by the official in charge of the Foreign Relations Bureau of the Iraq Command of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party.

Paper Notes Western Trade Contacts, Weakened Embargo

JN1304100894 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0715 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Baghdad, 13 Apr (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH affirms that the intense momentum in the number of visits to Baghdad by Western businessmen and trade firms is highly significant, and shows that the embargo clamped on Iraq is almost over.

In an article today, AL-THAWRAH, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, adds that these Western parties hope to conclude business contracts and economic agreements with Iraq pending a lifting of the sanctions so as to resume their transactions with Iraq.

The paper notes the many offers Iraq has received from Western companies, including French, Italian, Greek, and Turkish corporations. The paper adds that the business community in Washington and London has not failed to express hope that it will not be denied a share in this competition. It made its position in this regard quite clear in its recent meeting with an Iraqi delegation in New York, a meeting that was held there at its own request.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that the strong competition among Western firms and corporations to curry favor with Iraq, and win cooperation contracts with it demonstrates that Iraq has emerged from the bottleneck, and efficiently shown its endurance and perseverance. This also shows that Iraq is an indispensable, important, and key regional player in terms of economy—with which cooperation is essential.

AL-THAWRAH also notes the impact of the embargo on the domestic front, saying that the past few years have underscored the excellence and superiority of Iraqi expertise, as manifested in its inventive and creative accomplishments within the context of the national reconstruction drive to rebuild what was destroyed in record time. This has rendered Iraqi expertise a strong competitor.

The paper also notes the embargo Washington has been enforcing to weaken and exhaust the Iraqis. But thanks to the wisdom of the leadership and the awareness of our people, the embargo has turned into a factor of attrition detrimental to others. Instead of becoming a heavy load on our chest, the embargo has burdened many European businesses which have not hidden their bitterness over U.S. deception and Washington's obtaining the lion share. These businesses were also embittered by Washington's frenzied efforts to obtain the traditional European shares in the Middle East markets. In this regard, the paper notes France's loss of an airbus deal with Saudi Arabia, the deal Washington has won.

AL-THAWRAH sheds light on the serious harm inflicted on Western interests in the region as a result of their resignation to the U.S. deception and intimidation campaign, saying that the most obvious result of this has been the bankruptcy of some 4,000 Turkish companies over the past two years due to the Iraq embargo, not to mention that hundreds of West European and East European firms have laid off many of their workers and employees and been forced to shut down for the same reason.

To corroborate its argument, the paper cites statements recently made by a senior official of the Greek Ports Corporation that the halt in trade activities with Iraq has seriously affected the economy of his country. He added that the harm done to Greek ports due to the embargo is understandably equal to the financial revenues Greece has lost. The embargo is also responsible for increasing unemployment rates. The Greek official expressed hope that the anti-Iraq embargo will be lifted so that his country may reactivate its trade and business links with Iraq.

Regarding the impact of the Iraq embargo on the Arab scene, the paper cites a report issued by the Arab Labor Organization last week. This report stated that the number of unemployed in the Arab states has risen to 5 million due to the severance of trade ties with Iraq.

Saddam's Adviser in Moscow To Discuss Oil Field Plan

NC1104153794 Paris AFP in English 1424 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Text] Nicosia, April 11 (AFP)—An adviser to President Saddam Husayn has held talks in Moscow about Russia resuming work on developing a giant oil field in southern Iraq, a specialist newsletter reported here Monday.

'Adnan al-'Ani, an adviser with ministerial rank, led the delegation to Moscow last week to discuss developing the West al-Qurnah field when the UN embargo is lifted, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said.

The field close to the northern tip of the North al-Rumaylah field will have an estimated output capacity of 600,000 barrels per day after a second phase of work is completed, it added.

In an agreement signed in April 1984, the former Soviet Union was to develop the field under an engineering, supply, and construction contract financed by a 2-billion dollar soft credit facility.

Technoexport, a Soviet firm, was responsible for the first phase with a production capacity of 200,000 bpd, according to MEES published in Cyprus.

Much of the field's surface facilities have been built, but Technoexport was behind schedule when Iraq in?nah field was discovered by the Iraqi National Oil Company in 1973.

A UN embargo was imposed on Iraq when it invaded Kuwait and the UN Security Council has set conditions for Iraq to meet in order to have the embargo lifted.

Country Protests Use of Saudi, Kuwaiti Airbase Facilities

JN1204122194 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1030 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Iraq has protested to the Arab League that Saudi and Kuwaiti rulers continue to make base facilities available for American, British, and French aircraft violating the Iraqi airspace. A letter from Iraq's permanent delegate to the Arab League pointed out the serious threat the violations carry for the security, sovereignty, and national unity of Iraq.

The American, British, and French aircraft mounted 277 sorties over Iraq between 1 and 7 April, having taken off from bases in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Attached to the letter was a detailed list of the flights for the attention of the league members.

Six Killed, 25 Wounded in Hadera Explosion

TA1304082394 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0755 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Excerpts] Six were killed and about 25 slightly injured in an explosion inside a bus during a boarding interval in the Hadera central bus station. The No. 820 bus was on its way from 'Afula to Tel Aviv.

It is believed that Arabs, who boarded the bus at one of the stops, left the bomb on the bus. Another theory says the perpetrator was a suicide terrorist. [passage omitted]

Our correspondent Yo'av Aviv adds that there has been a second explosion on the bus, this time apparently a planned blast activated by bomb disposal experts, who found another bomb. The Hadera central bus station has been closed off, and local inhabitants are staging a demonstration nearby, calling out anti-Arab slogans. [passage omitted]

'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam Claims Responsibility

TA1304084494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0838 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] We have just learned that 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam has assumed responsibility for the Hadera attack. They placed a telephone call to Qol Yisra'el—that is how brazen they are—and speaking in Arabic, they made their announcement that 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam assumes responsibility for this attack.

Rabin, Peres, Others React to Hadera Attack

TA1304112494 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Reacting to the Hadera attack, President 'Ezer Weizman calls for national unity, for keeping calm, and continuing the peace process. In his opinion, the government should consider several additional steps that can ensure security.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin also calls for national unity and for finding the unifying factors in anticipation of the hard times ahead. He adds that despite the bloodshed, Israel will continue extending its hand in peace.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres says the Hadera attack will not halt the peace process or deter Israel in the pursuit of its goals. He further said that 'Arafat is not omnipotent, and there is no point in continuously demanding that he denounce terrorist attacks.

Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu blames the government for the rising terror and demands that the prime minister either discontinue the negotiations with the PLO or announce elections.

Tzomet head Refa'el Eytan demands that the government stop the peace talks until terror stops. This is also the demand of YI'UD [Independent and Democratic Israel] head Gonen Segev.

Meretz faction chairman Ran Kohen calls on 'Arafat and the Palestinian leadership to immediately condemn the heinous murder. He calls on Israeli opposition leaders not to disrupt the national unity of Remembrance Day mourning and not to exploit the attack for political purposes.

The National Religious Party calls on the prime minister to resign at once.

Minister Yosi Sarid says the government will do all it can to pursue terrorists, but it will pursue peace at the same time.

The Arab Democratic Party and Deputy Minister Walid Sadiq condemn the Hadera attack.

The Moledet faction calls for an immediate halt of the negotiations with the Palestinians and for banning their policemen from Gaza and Jericho.

Police Minister Moshe Shahal promises to capture the perpetrators. He says the government will not rest until it brings peace.

Peres Says 'Nothing Secret' With Syria

TA1304092594 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0500 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres by Ya'el Dan and Mikha Friedman—live]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Dan] We have just heard of a breakthrough, of some contacts and agreements between the PLO and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement], of these two parties discussing coexistence for the sake of the Palestinian people. Are you encouraged by this development? Do you believe Hamas will join the peace process?

[Peres] There is a lot of pretense in these matters and in the relationship among the Arabs, quite a lot of embellishment and not enough substance. All I can say is that if Hamas emulates the PLO by abandoning terror and sanctioning peace, it will be the surprise of the century. I doubt that.

[Dan] Can their coexistence be negative from our point of view?

[Peres] If the coexistence is negative, there will be no agreement. We must not forget that peace is not an agreement on reciprocal favors. Peace serves each side, first and foremost.

[Friedman] Mr. Peres, this week we read reports emanating from the top echelons of your ministry to the effect that the outlines of the arrangement with Syria are absolutely clear to you: In return for full peace, there will

be full Israeli withdrawal on the Golan Heights, which will not happen gradually over 20 years, but rather within a much shorter period. Is that the master plan of peace with Syria?

[Peres] No, I do not think so. You can put anything on paper, and there can be as many position papers as you like. No such stand has been embraced by the Israeli Government, and hence, not by the Foreign Ministry either. The Foreign Ministry is an integral part of the government. I think what the paper intended was mainly to emphasize the positive aspect—the need for a comprehensive agreement with all the Arab countries on all the disputed issues. They may have meant to indicate the price exacted by al-Asad. In any event, it is not a binding paper, and there are lots of papers and lots of archives in the State of Israel.

[Dan] The truth, Mr. Peres, is that unless you tell us that there is truth in the reports about secret agreements with Syria, we have been hearing more reports about increased Syrian military buildup than of peace negotiations.

[Peres] There is nothing secret with the Syrians. It is true, the Syrian Army is making buildup attempts, which is certainly a problem we cannot discount. In the fundamental, profoundly historic sense, however, Syria has no option other than peace. Even if it purchases weapons from Russia....[pauses] Russia as it was known exists no longer, not even in terms of weapon production and terms of supply.

[Friedman] When you say there is nothing secret with Syria, are you saying it with regret, because in view of the stalemate, it would have been better....

[Peres, interrupting] I was definitely speaking regretfully, because I think the negotiations should be more open on the one hand and more clandestine on the other. They should be more open in order to show each nation that the other side desires peace explicitly and unwaveringly.

[Friedman] Then what holds the Syrians back from promoting the peace process with us?

[Peres] Old habits, including a regime which is not open, a regime which does not openly face its public, a very uncommunicative regime in a universe in which television and other electronic media, newspapers, and radio networks all participate in the negotiations. It should be clear that negotiations cannot be conducted by officials or ministers alone, they have to be conducted by nations. They should be negotiations that look and sound good, and they should be plausible. The details can be negotiated at a site not lit up by the sun.

[Dan] Have we made attempts to hold contacts away from the sun, and were these attempts snubbed by the Syrians? Is that the reason....?

[Peres, interrupting] No. I mean, attempts were made, we did suggest that as in any other negotiations, one segment should be more exposed, more public, and the other more technical and more confidential to enable us to conduct negotiations without encountering daily criticism over some leaked details.

[Dan] Mr. Peres, when do you anticipate peace with Syria?

[Peres] It is very difficult to tell, because the Syrians are very obstinate, and their march forward is very sluggish. They are extremely slow. I hope it will happen this year, but I can make no guarantees. [passage omitted]

IDF Kills Arab, Demolishes Suspected Hamas House

TA1204165294 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Twenty-three-year-old 'Awwad Hasan Tabbash was killed today by soldiers' gunfire in the al-Jalazun refugee camp near Ramallah. Local Arabs told our correspondent Moti Amir that soldiers opened fire at stonethrowers who attacked Israeli cars driving on the Ramallah-Nabulus road. According to them, the youngster was hit by the fire and died at the Ramallah hospital. The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] is looking into the circumstances of the incident.

A youngster from the Dayr al-Balah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip was arrested near the industrial zone at the Erez checkpoint. He was carrying a knife and a Koran. An initial check revealed that he had been on his way to stab soldiers stationed at the checkpoint.

At noon today, IDF troops demolished a building in which armed Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] terrorists were believed to be barricaded. The house was surrounded early this morning, and the IDF imposed a curfew on Ramallah. The security forces tried for a long time to make the terrorists surrender. In the last few hours, Fatah members phoned Tunis to inform Yasir 'Arafat that the IDF had laid siege to the house of Dr. al-Wahidi, a Fatah member and a personal acquaintance of 'Arafat. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that IDF bulldozers demolished the house after all its inhabitants were taken out and after the terrorists were urged several times to come out and surrender. Our correspondent points out that Dr. al-Wahidi is the father of the terrorist Avir al-Wahidi. She was arrested about a year ago for taking part in the murder of Israelis.

Civilian Reportedly Wounds 9 Arabs in Jericho

TA1304094194 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0930 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] An Israeli civilian fired at Jericho residents in as yet unknown circumstances, wounding nine Arabs, four of whom sustained serious injuries. The event happened at about 1200 today. This was reported by ITIM.

Soldiers Said Responsible

TA1304102994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1000 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Two Israelis were hurt in a stoning incident in the village of al-Jib north of Jerusalem.

In Jericho, four residents were wounded by rubber bullets fired by soldiers after stones were hurled at Israeli cars. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that rumors were disseminated in Jericho saying that nine locals were wounded in a shooting incident. It has been learned that all the casualties had been wounded by soldiers' gunfire.

Report on Bid To Monitor U.S. War Contacts Denied

JN1204175394 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 11 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by Salamah Ni'mat in Amman]

[Text] Jordan denied yesterday that it sought to obtain a sophisticated electronic communications system to intercept and monitor U.S. military and political contacts during the Gulf war. A spokesman for the Royal Court said that the communications system Jordan ordered from the Novacom [preceding word in English] Company was "designed for other purposes that concern Jordan." The Jordanian spokesman added that "the U.S. Government was informed" of the purpose of this communications system, noting that Jordan sought to obtain the Viper [preceding word in English] system before the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and before the Gulf war. The spokesman noted that "it was not strange for Jordan to try to obtain a sophisticated communications system at that time."

The U.S. weekly NEWSWEEK will publish in its issue dated today a report on Jordan's attempt to obtain a communications system "to intercept contacts via satellites used by the United States, Israel, Russia, and Arab countries."

The magazine cites Pentagon sources as saying that the U.S. authorities "feared" that the communications system would reach Iraq, adding that the U.S. State Department rejected a Pentagon request to ban the entry to the United States of a senior Jordanian official because he was responsible for "smuggling" a communications system from the United States to Jordan.

Jordanian sources said that the deal to supply Jordan with the communications system was not accomplished because the U.S. company was not able to obtain an export license. The same sources noted that a U.S. federal court prevented the shipping of the communications system because no export license was granted and fined the exporting company because it did not abide by the exportation conditions stipulated by U.S. law.

The Jordanian sources stressed that no accusations were leveled against the Jordanian Government or any officials in this case. The sources added that "the project was shelved" in February 1991 following consultations with the U.S. Government.

Official Jordanian sources said that certain official U.S. quarters "leaked" anti-Jordanian news "as part of a media campaign accompanying the economic and political pressure to which we are being exposed within the framework of the peace process." Jordanian officials said that the United States' continued maritime siege on the Jordanian Port of al-'Aqabah—despite the existence of alternatives to ensure the implementation of the economic embargo on Iraq—is part of the economic pressure aimed at forcing Jordan to sign a peace treaty with Israel.

It is worth noting that Jordan's King Husayn warned two weeks ago that Jordan's resumption of its role in the peace process is now "contingent" on ending the blockade imposed on the Port of al-'Aqabah. The blockade, imposed on the port since 1990, has cost the Jordanian economy $1.3 billion.

New Weekly Examines 'Tension' With U.S.

JN1104172994 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 11 Apr 94 pp 1, 4

[Report by the political editor]

[Text] Following the official Jordanian announcement linking the continuation of the negotiations with the end of the siege on the Port of al-'Aqabah, Jordanian-U.S. relations entered a transient state of tension similar to many episodes in the past, the most notable of which was the crisis in relations during the Gulf war. Such a state of relations is termed estrangement for the sake of rapprochement. Even if relations seem tense on the surface, they remain controlled in a state of harmony despite the fact that disputes sometimes allow for such tension!!

The question is: What happened and where did the real shake up in relations occur? And are there any new facts in the siege of al-'Aqabah or the negotiations?

In fact, there are new realities concerning those two issues. However, it is more important to note, however, that relations became tense following the Oslo agreement. The United States became dissatisfied with the performance of the Arab parties, especially Jordan, after the quick and dramatic step taken by the PLO, in which it surpassed everything that is normal in terms of making concessions. The Arab parties could no longer keep up with this step, except by announcing their final submission to the Israeli conditions. Moreover, they could no longer adopt an opposing stand, like what happened when dealing with [former Egyptian President] al-Sadat's signing of the Camp David agreement. The Arab parties taking direct part in the negotiating process are weak and separated, just like the other nonparticipating Arab parties. Any contribution by distant countries would be a negative contribution. This is what is happening with some Gulf and Arab Maghreb countries, which are taking normalization steps and are using the fact that the sole and legitimate representative [of the Palestinian people] signed the Oslo agreement with Israel as a justification!!

On the first day after the Oslo agreement, Jordan adopted a reserved stand, regardless of the seriousness of the agreement. This is because Jordan considered its role as an umbrella in the negotiations as no longer valid. This is especially true since the PLO began to hold direct negotiations and thus it no longer needed an umbrella. It

may not even need the Madrid formula or any international formula, especially since the United States has achieved what it always called for in terms of the need to hold direct negotiations with Israel without U.S. mediation, which is exactly what Israel wants.

It is also known that the reserved Jordanian stand—a stand which even rejected the Oslo agreement in the beginning—turned 180 degrees and became a supportive one. It was clear from the beginning that this support for the Oslo agreement was compulsory and that Jordan had to take more than one step to cope with the course of Israeli-Palestinian contacts. Hence, many meetings and talks were held and many statements were made. These meetings did not satisfy Israel, which insisted on signing a separate peace treaty or agreement and was not satisfied with signing an agenda only.

Within the framework of exerting pressure on Jordan, Israel announced that Jordan would sign an agreement with Israel before the end of last year. Moreover, PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat announced more than once that the day of signing this agreement is approaching. He said on more than one occasion that this agreement was going to be signed last January.

'Arafat's remarks in this regard were based on Israeli and U.S. reports that King Husayn would sign a peace agreement during his U.S. visit in January 1994.

Jordan had received a U.S. letter in late 1993, stressing in the strongest possible terms the need to use the Jordanian monarch's Washington visit to sign a peace agreement at a meeting between the U.S. president, the Israeli prime minister, and the Jordanian monarch. Nonetheless, Jordan rejected the U.S. proposal.

When King Husayn visited the United States, he came under strong pressure from the U.S. Administration to sign a peace treaty with Israel. However, King Husayn reiterated his rejection of this proposal, and stressed his adherence to comprehensive peace, contending that this is the only guarantee for the success of the peace process.

The Jordanians thought that they had neutralized U.S. anger over this issue. Besides, the United States pretended to understand the rationale behind the Jordanian position. Nonetheless, the signals sent by Washington afterward reflected exasperation, and put greater pressure on Jordan to sign a unilateral peace treaty or take positions that would help untie the stalemated Israeli-PLO negotiations, particularly in the aftermath of the Hebron massacre.

Then came the visit to Saudi Arabia by King Husayn to perform the minor pilgrimage in the holy places there, and Saudi Arabia's failure to conduct itself properly, in line with even the most basic duties acknowledged in international relations. This development was a U.S. message addressed to Jordan. At any rate, it was the tightening of the siege clamped on the Port of al-'Aqabah that further aggravated the strained Jordanian-U.S. ties.

The incidents of intercepting and turning back al-'Aqabah-bound ships have increased dramatically. The most obvious position taken in this regard was the public threat made by a U.S. congressional delegation that visited Jordan in March. This delegation said that the siege clamped on the Port of al-'Aqabah will be aggravated if Jordan does not sign a unilateral peace treaty with Israel, adding that the signing of such a treaty would result in efforts to lift the siege.

The congressional delegation asserted that it would recommend the lifting of the al-'Aqabah siege, as well as aid to Jordan, if Jordan meets the U.S. demand of signing a treaty with Israel. Moreover, the United States was extremely dissatisfied with Jordan's refusal to host an economic conference scheduled to have convened in Amman on 10 April. The countries concerned with economic activities in the region, including Israel, were slated to participate in the meetings of this conference.

A carrot offered to Jordan in this regard was talk of a possible reconsideration of Jordan's debts by the United States and West European states. Nonetheless, there were no firm commitments in this regard. Jordan replied by saying that it could not host such a meeting in Amman at present. However, Jordan said that it would not object to hosting such a conference in late 1994 if the parties to the Middle East peace process manage to achieve a comprehensive peace agreement on all tracks of the negotiations, as expected.

In a nutshell, Jordan will remain faced with pressure and intimidation to weaken its position and impose unfair conditions on it in order to force it to sign a peace treaty with Israel and effect a premature normalization of ties. Jordan's recent announcement that it is linking its continued engagement in the negotiations to the lifting of the siege clamped on the Port of al- 'Aqabah may have achieved numerous objectives, the first among which is that U.S. efforts are currently focused on a return to the course of the negotiations enshrined in the Madrid formula. This keeps at bay any talk of a unilateral peace agreement.

The most important thing that experience has taught us is that submission to the United States always produces negative results.

U.S. Charged With Charting Education Policy

JN1204092194 Amman AL-MAJD in Arabic 11 Apr 94 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Washington Charts Jordanian School Curricula; the U.S. Ambassador Urges Jordanian Educationists To Expedite Change of Curricula]

[Excerpt] AL-MAJD has learned that the Ministry of Education is currently implementing a U.S. project for Jordanian curricula, particularly in the subjects of national education, science, and mathematics.

Reliable sources told AL-MAJD that the ministry is currently changing these curricula in accordance with a U.S. cultural project. The ministry's curricula director has visited Washington to bring U.S. experts specialized in preparing scholastic textbooks. The head of the American Information Center prepared secondary school vocational education programs as well as training programs for secondary stage teachers.

U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Wesley Egan and U.S. Cultural Attache Jonathan Rice visited the Ministry of Education. They met with educational leaders, who reviewed their accomplishments in cooperating with the U.S. cultural project and how they brought a U.S. expert to modify the social and national education textbooks for the primary stage and hold two workshops for English language teachers, supervised by a U.S. expert.

The leading educationists thanked the U.S. Administration for the "facilities" extended by the American Information Center in issues of politics and society. The U.S. ambassador, in turn, thanked the ministry's educational leaders for their coordination and cooperation efforts to implement the U.S. cultural program and asked them to continue their implementation the "Humphrey" program for studies in the field of education planning. [passage omitted]

King's Reception of Iraqi Envoy Reported

JN1204172694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1655 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Amman, 12 Apr (INA)—King Husayn of Jordan this afternoon received Hamid Yusuf Hammadi, [Iraqi] minister of culture and information and the personal envoy of President Saddam Husayn. Hammadi conveyed to King Husayn a personal message from President Saddam Husayn that deals with the fraternal bilateral relations and the importance of coordinating stands with Arab and friendly countries to support Iraq's position to have the unjust embargo lifted.

King Husayn stressed to President Saddam Husayn's personal envoy Jordan's solidarity with Iraq, especially since Iraq has proven its compliance with Security Council resolutions, which means that the Security Council should now implement Paragraph 22 of Security Council Resolution 687 and immediately lift the Iraq embargo.

The meeting was attended by Royal Court Chief al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir and the Iraqi ambassador to Jordan.

'Obstacles' To Convening Jordan-Egypt Forum Denied

PM1204154094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 12 Apr 94 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Jordanian Information Minister Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: No Obstacles to Meetings With Egypt, End of April Date Proposed for Committee Meeting"]

[Excerpt] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Jordanian Information Minister Dr. Jawad al-'Anani yesterday denied the existence of any obstacles to the convening of the meetings of the joint Jordanian-Egyptian higher committee.

He told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the meetings are expected to be held in the "last week of this month," as proposed previously. Nothing has happened to change this date. Al-'Anani added that it is hoped that the meetings will be held in the last week of this month under the two countries' prime ministers.

The Jordanian minister denied that there are any problems preventing the convening of the meeting. He said that there is a joint Jordanian-Egyptian desire to hold the meetings to achieve the two countries' interests and work to develop their bilateral relations in all spheres. [passage omitted]

Turkish Foreign Ministry Official Pays Visit

Al-Hasan Receives Sanberk

JN1104183294 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1545 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Text] Amman, 11 Apr (PETRA)—Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, today received Ozdem Sanberk, under secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, who is currently on a visit to Jordan.

The minister and the guest discussed bilateral relations, the means to reinforce and develop these relations, the latest regional and international developments, and the peace process. Al-Hasan explained Jordan's position toward the peace process and the vital role it is playing, as well as His Majesty King Husayn's efforts to bring about a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region based on the principles of international legitimacy and UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338.

Al-Hasan stressed the importance of lifting the suffering caused by the siege on the Port of al-'Aqabah and the need to intensify efforts to stop these measures, which have resulted in serious losses for the Jordanian economy.

For his part, Sanberk stressed the depth of the traditional ties linking the two countries. He praised His Majesty King Husayn's wise and enlightened leadership and the sincere efforts his majesty is exerting to achieve peace and maintain security and stability in the region.

In another development, the Jordanian side, led by Nayif al-Hadid, secretary general of the Foreign Ministry, and the Turkish side, led by Ozdem Sanberk, under secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, held talks at the Foreign Ministry building today. The talks dealt with bilateral relations and the need to upgrade these relations beyond coordination and cooperation in all available fields.

Al-Hadid briefed the guest on Jordan's policy toward the peace process and the pillars of the Jordanian stand. This stand is represented by the need to implement the principles of international legitimacy and Resolutions 242 and 338; Israel's withdrawal from all the occupied Arab territories, particularly Jerusalem; securing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian Arab people on their national soil; restoring the Jordanian rights to land, security, and water; and solving the refugees problem.

Al-Hadid stressed the great importance of ending the siege imposed on the Gulf of Aqaba in light of Jordan's commitment to UN resolutions and its constructive stands toward the peace process and toward the region's stability and security.

For his part, Sanberk said that Jordanian and Turkish views were identical on the need to adhere to the principles of international legitimacy in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East. He praised the Jordanian role and His Majesty King Husayn's role in achieving security and stability in the region and in pushing peace efforts forward.

Attending on the Jordanian side were the Jordanian ambassador in Ankara and a number of Foreign Ministry officials. Attending on the Turkish side were the Turkish ambassador in Amman and members of the accompanying delegation.

Economic Issues, Water, Embargo Discussed

JN1204081894 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 12 Apr 94, p 3

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter, P. V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—A senior Turkish official held high-level talks here Monday [11 April] on the Middle East peace process and bilateral relations and said later Ankara attaches much importance to developing economic cooperation among the countries of the Middle East.

Ozdem Sanberk, under-secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, said his talks here also covered the strife in former Yugoslavia as well as the implications for Turkey and Jordan of the continuing international sanctions against Iraq.

"Since Jordan plays a crucial role in the ongoing Middle East peace process, the Jordanian side elaborated in detail this particular issue," Mr. Sanberk told the Jordan Times after talks with Prime Minister 'Abd al-Salam al-Majali and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal al-Hasan.

Describing the talks as very fruitful, the Turkish official said there were "no problems whatsoever between Turkey and Jordan on the bilateral level," and that "we noted with satisfaction that our visas concerning the international as well as regional issues are widely coverging." [sentence as published]

The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said Minister al-Hasan and Mr. Sanberk reviewed progress in the peace process and the implementation of U.N. Security council resolutions 242 and 338.

Mr. al-Hassan briefed Mr. Sanberk on the continued siege on the Port of al-'Aqabah and reaffirmed Jordan's call for an end to the damaging inspections of all ships bound for Jordan.

In his interview with the JORDAN TIMES, Mr. Sanberk restated his country's stand that Iraq should abide by United Nations Security Council resolutions. "Iraq must adopt a clear stand to give confidence to her neighbour Kuwait," he said.

At the same time, he said, the embargo on Iraq continues to hurt the people of Iraq.

"It has also created a very heavy economic burden for Turkey," said the official, whose country has been calling for an easing of the sweeping 44-month-old international sanctions against its neighbour.

"The same problem also exists for Jordan," he said of the impact of the sanctions. "We hope that the point for lifting the embargo would be reached soon. Cooperation between Iraq and the U.N. must be intensified to this end.

"The U.N. long-term monitoring programme (of Iraq's weapons) must be put fully into practice without delay and be effectively implemented in order that the oil embargo is lifted," he said.

Answering a question, the Turkish official said the outcome of recent municipal elections in Turkey where Islamic activisits put up a strong showing had no impact on the secular principles that the country was founded on.

"in the modern Turkey founded by Ataturk, Turks are devout, as always, and the religion is perceived as an individual choice, an individual realisation of oneself," he said.

"Islam is not reduced in its political dimentions and... the results (of the elections) reflect not the religious expression of the individuals but their political preferenes within the normal functioning of a multiparty democratic system," Mr. Sanberk said.

He said Turkey, which is waging a war against the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) in the southeast, wanted "her partners and neighbours to abide by their commitments not to give shelter to those who resort to indiscriminate separatist violence."

The official conceded that the Kurdish problem has led to disputes between Turkey and some of the European countries which have accused Ankara of violating human rights in its battle agaisnt the PKK.

But, he said, several countries have in Europe as well as the U.S. itself "declared (the PKK) a terrorist organisation," and France and Germany had banned PKK activities in their territories.

"It is obvious that terrorism is a gross violation of human rights and is aimed at the same time at the destruction of fundamental aspects of freedom and democracy," he said.

Mr. Sanberk said Turkey expects the Middle East peace process to create a better atmosphere for regional economic cooperation.

In this a context, he said, a "peace pipeline" project—which will bring Turkish water to the Gulf states and others in the region—"is still on the table."

"It can only be materialised should the countries of the region see its realisation in their interest and effectively participate in their realisation," added Mr. Sanberk, in an apparent reference to the financing needed for the project.

When it was first proposed several years ago, the project was estimated to cost about $12 billion. Revised estimates put the cost at between $15 million and $20 million [numbers as published].

In Ankara on Monday, visiting Israeli Foreign Miniter Shimon Peres said Turkish and Israeli experts would look into the possibility of various projects for the shipment of water from Turkey to Israel. One idea is that water from Manavgat River could be carried in plastic containes and floated on the Mediterranean to Israel.

Turkish Official, Delegation Depart

JN1304101394 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 0900 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Ozdem Sanberk, under secretary of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, and the accompanying delegation left Amman today after a three-day visit to Jordan. During the visit, Sanberk met with Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali, the prime minister, and Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs. Talks dealt with relations between the two friendly countries and developments of the peace process.

Al-Hasan Confers With Canadian Official

JN1304073094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Talal Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for cabinet affairs, at noon today received Marc Perron, deputy secretary general of the Canadian Foreign Ministry, who is the head of the working group on refugees, and his delegation. The delegation is currently on a fact-finding mission in the region to become acquainted with the conditions of the Palestinian refugees in their host countries in coordination with the UNRWA.

The minister briefed the Canadian official on the latest developments in the peace process and the central role of Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty King Husayn, in advancing the peace process in accordance with the principles of international legitimacy, on which basis the process was launched. These principles were represented in Resolutions 242 and 338.

The minister also explained the burden on Jordan as a result of the siege imposed on the Port of al-'Aqabah, and stressed that this subject should be given special attention and that a solution should be found to it in light of Jordan's commitment to the relevant international resolutions.

The minister also spoke about the additional burden Jordan bears in its capacity as the country hosting the largest number of Palestinian refugees, and stressed the need to reach a just and acceptable solution for their problems in accordance with the relevant international resolutions.

For his part, Perron praised the Jordanian efforts concerning the refugees in particular, and the role Jordan plays in the peace process in general. He expressed understanding for the difficulties and burden Jordan is facing, and emphasized the importance of making efforts to help reach a solution to the refugees problem in its humanitarian and political dimensions.

The meeting was attended by Marwan Dudin, member of the Jordanian delegation to the peace talks, and the Canadian ambassador in Amman.

Minister Says France To Be Asked To Extradite 'Awn

NC1204151094 Paris AFP in English 1352 GMT 12 April 94

[Text] Beirut, April 12 (AFP)—Lebanon is to ask for the extradition of Christian opposition leader Michel 'Awn living in political asylum in France, Labour Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin said on Tuesday [13 April].

Al-Amin, a pro-Syrian, warned ties between the two countries could worsen if the request was turned down and blamed "certain French cabinet ministers for being responsible for the death of Lebanese people because of their support for 'Awn."

He did not name the ministers but told the London-based AL-HAYAH newspaper received in Beirut "they are trying to destroy what is left of French-Lebanese relations."

Al-Amin, who last year headed the Lebanese branch of the Syrian ruling Ba'th Party, said the ministers' stance did not reflect official French policy.

General 'Awn headed a military government in the late 1980s until he was driven out of the presidential palace in 1990 in a joint Syrian-Lebanese offensive.

He was given refuge at the French embassy in Lebanon and was banished the following year to France, where he was given political asylum on condition he avoided any political activity, including political statements.

But in a recent interview with AL-HAYAH, 'Awn blasted the Beirut government and voiced support for a federation in Lebanon.

'Awn Urges Opposition Faction Congress in France

NC1304104894 Paris AFP in English 0917 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Beirut, April 13 (AFP)—Exiled Christian opposition leader Michel 'Awn has called for factions opposed to the Syrian-backed Lebanon government to set up a congress in Paris, in a move which could sour relations with France.

The congress would pave the way for a "legitimate representative body for the Lebanese people because it is now impossible to organise any political activity in Lebanon to confront the occupation," General 'Awn told AL-NAHAR newspaper on Wednesday [13 April].

"As long as Syria maintains its presence in Lebanon, the country's stability will be in jeopardy," 'Awn was quoted as saying by AL-NAHAR.

Supporters of 'Awn said the renegade Lebanese army general announced earlier this month that a committee was to be set up to prepare for a "Liberation and Renewal" congress to be held in Paris on June 11.

A government official told AFP any political activity by 'Awn would be a clear violation of an agreement with France, which has granted him political asylum since 1991.

Lebanon feels that France is not respecting its engagements and the relations between the two countries could suffer, said the official who declined to be identified.

On Tuesday Lebanese pro-Syrian Labour Minister 'Abdallah al-Amin said Lebanon was planning to ask France to extradite 'Awn, warning ties could worsen if Paris turned down the request.

'Awn was granted political asylum in France after he was banished from Lebanon in 1991, on condition he avoided any political activity.

The Lebanese army officer led a military government in the late 1980s that had refused to step down after presidential elections. He had fought Syrian troops in a "war of liberation."

But 'Awn was driven out of the presidential palace in a joint Syrian-Lebanese offensive, ordered to stay out of Lebanon and refrain from political activity until 1996.

Syria maintains some 35,000 troops in Lebanon, where Israel also occupies a self-declared "security zone" along the international border.

Two Detained for Killing Iraqi Opposition Figure

NC1304112194 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] The Internal Security Forces have uncovered the crime of the killing of Iraqi national Talib Suhayl last night, four hours after the crime was committed. Two suspects have been apprehended and are being interrogated as to the circumstances of the crime.

[In a related report, Paris AFP in English at 1028 GMT on 13 April adds the following: "Gunmen shot dead an 81-year-old member of the Iraqi opposition, police said here Wednesday [13 April]. They identified the victim as Talib Suhayl, 81, a long-time resident of Lebanon who held a Jordanian passport. Two suspects were arrested after Suhayl was shot dead Tuesday night in his West Beirut home, they said, without providing further details."]

Court Passes First Death Sentences 'Since the 1970s'

NC1304112494 Paris AFP in English 0959 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Beirut, April 13 (AFP)—A Lebanese court has sentenced to death two Syrian soldiers and a Lebanese fugitive for the 1992 murder of two Lebanese Christian brothers, court officials said Wednesday [13 April].

The sentence, which cannot be appealed, was the first to be issued by the Court of Justice since the 1970s.

It comes after the government decided last month to reactivate capital punishment in Lebanon.

The soldiers 'Abd-al Karim Jeij and Muhammad Zaatar had been handed over by Syria to Lebanese authorities as part of the investigation into the murder of jewellers Ghassan and Jalil Antonios.

The soldiers were not present in court when the verdict was announced on Tuesday.

Lebanese fugitive Nehme Hamade lives in Belgium, which has refused a Lebanese request to extradite him.

On March 11 parliament voted in a law bringing in the death penalty for political crimes and scrapping an extenuating circumstances clause which had exempted politically-motivated crimes.

The vote was part of a package of measures by the government to tighten security and legal procedures following a church bombing in February which killed 10 people and wounded 54 others.

The death penalty, always by hanging, has only been applied three times in the past 35 years in Lebanon. The last execution was carried out in 1983.

Information Minister on Meeting With U.S. Envoy

NC1304121794 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Information Minister Michel Samahah received U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Mark Hambley in his office today. They discussed the general political situation in Lebanon and the Middle East peace talks. They exchanged views on current media issues. Minister Samahah described the meeting as very friendly, noting that the ambassador expressed support for the Lebanese Government's course. Samahah said:

[Begin recording] [Samahah] We exchanged views on current media issues, the political situation in the country, and the Middle East negotiations cosponsored by the U.S. Government and Russia. The negotiations are continuing in various forms in Washington. Regarding the media issue, the ambassador asked about latest developments. We had a quiet discussion on the issue. The ambassador showed complete understanding of the Lebanese Government's measures. He encouraged the government's efforts to apply the law, respect the principles of the Constitution and freedoms, put things in order through the measures, bylaws, the amendment of Decree No. 104, the audio and visual media law, and the inclination toward plurality through the Cabinet's instructions to the committee tasked with preparing the draft media law. The ambassador showed full understanding in his response to these measures. The atmosphere of the meeting was very friendly, almost [as heard] supportive of the government approach and measures that emphasize maintaining the institutions and homeland and implementing the law. [end recording]

Junblatt: Druze Radio To Close Down 'for Good'

NC1204200694 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Interview with Walid Junblatt, minister of refugee affairs, by an unidentified correspondent on 12 April; place not given]

[Text] [Correspondent] Your Excellency: Yesterday you announced the closing down of Voice of the Mountain radio. Why did you make this decision?

[Junblatt] The decision is in line with the government decision to reorganize the audio and visual media. The reasons that led to the establishment of Voice of the Mountain in 1983 or 1984 no longer exist today. They were political, military, regional and other reasons that have ceased to exist.

[Correspondent] You mean it will be closed down for good?

[Junblatt] I believe it will be for good, because Voice of the Mountain is not just a radio that broadcasts musical or non-musical radio. It is a political radio. Now since all the political voices will be represented in the official media, that is, the official radio and television, there is no reason to keep Voice of the Mountain. I do not believe there are political reasons that necessitate the existence of private radios that belong to parties or sects. At the extraordinary cabinet meeting yesterday, we discussed the issue of reorganizing the audio and visual media. I pointed out that it is impossible in Lebanon to have a single media service, namely, the state media, because this is against the nature of the Lebanese and against the age. In the meantime, it is impossible to go back to the past media chaos, which posed political and security dangers and jeopardized the march of internal peace and the return of the refugees. Thus, I suggested that we follow the example of a democratic and civilized state such as France. In France, there are four or five television stations. I believe this is good. After all, we are not better than France.

[Correspondent] What do you think are the rules needed to tackle the media issue?

[Junblatt] There is a committee in charge of this. There are technical rules of which I am not expert, as well as political bases. In the end, citizens have the right to express their views through official channels. As I have already stated, a state-controlled media similar to some Arab media would be dull, impossible to apply in Lebanon, and would run counter to the nature of the political pluralism in Lebanon. We seek media pluralism that allows for an effective state control and partnership, up to 51 percent or more [of the capital], to prevent parties and sects from controlling the media once again. In addition, to allow four or five television channels to operate in the country, as is the case in France, with the participation of the private sector on economic, not political or sectarian, foundations. For instance, it would

not be permitted for a representative of one of the sects to say that this is the Druze, Maronite, Shiite, or Sunni television station. There are economic rules. It could take the form of a joint-stock company. However, I stress the importance of the state's partnership as a form of control.

[Correspondent] To what extent do you want the state's control?

[Junblatt] There are specific rules that the information minister is working on. This is because media, political, and cultural control is a must. Today the country is living with the tunes of Maria [name indistinct] and others, an example of the moral decay that comes from we don't know where. This is disgraceful. Add to this the modern Egyptian films modeled after the soap opera Dallas. We must not impose such of cultural decay on the people. We must upgrade the standards, and I believe that the information minister, backed by a committee of his choosing, is qualified to undertake this job.

[Correspondent] Do you believe that the amendments introduced to the Publication Decree 104 yesterday [word indistinct] public and private [word indistinct]

[Junblatt] I believe so.

Daily Claims 'Triumph' Over Easing of Media Restrictions

NC1304063794 Paris AFP in English 0059 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Report by Salim Yassine]

[Excerpt] Beirut, April 13 (AFP)—The Lebanese government has eased restrictions on the country's private media in the face of mounting criticism and a threat by parliament to hold a debate on freedom of expression.

One week after adopting an amendment to a draft bill providing for the preventive suspension of publications and detention of journalists ahead of any court judgment, the government on Monday back-pedalled.

It decided to scrap the restrictions and reduced by half fines proposed last week against publications which carried stories deemed libelous to the head of state and presidents of friendly countries.

The respected AL-NAHAR daily said in a banner headline on Tuesday: "The government retracts: The press triumphs"—words which summed up the satisfaction in newsrooms across Beirut.

The restrictions against the press triggered an outcry in newspapers, at the press syndicate and in parliament where dozens of MPs signed a petition calling on parliament to open a debate on freedom of expression.

The government also eased a ban imposed two weeks ago on private radio and television stations. [passage omitted]

Four Militiamen Hurt in Attack on SLA Patrol

NC1304113394 Paris AFP in English 1014 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Marj'uyun, Lebanon, April 13 (AFP)—Four militiamen were wounded on Wednesday [13 April] in a bomb attack on a patrol in south Lebanon, a spokesman for Israel's proxy South Lebanon Army (SLA) said.

Two of the SLA militiamen were in a serious condition and were flown by helicopter to Israel, the spokesman said.

The roadside bomb exploded as the patrol was driving along just outside Marj'uyun, the headquarters of the Israeli army and SLA militia in south Lebanon.

It was the first such attack in four years in that area of Israel's self-declared "security zone", a security source said.

The SLA militia has been the target of repeated bomb and artillery attacks in recent months, claimed by anti-Israeli guerrillas, namely the Iranian-backed Hizballah.

In March, 12 SLA militiamen were killed and 25 others wounded in these attacks, the heaviest toll for several years.

Islamic Figure Regrets Delay of Pope's Visit

NC1304061494 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0430 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] The postponement of the pope's visit to Lebanon was the focus of a meeting yesterday between President Ilyas al-Hirawi and His Eminence Shaykh Muhammad Mahdi Shams-al-Din, chairman of the Higher Islamic Shiite Council. Shaykh Shams-al-Din said: We expressed our regret over the postponement of the pope's visit, which all Lebanese welcomed and prepared for to ensure its success. He said: We have already expressed our regret and repeat it now. He added: We pray to God almighty that the pope's circumstances will allow him to visit. He said: From this forum, the home of all Lebanese, from the Presidential Palace, I repeat my wish that his holiness will visit Lebanon as soon as possible because the Lebanese people strongly desire to see this visit take place. Also, the Lebanese Government wants the pope to visit. President al- Hirawi has just expressed the same desire and urges the pope to visit Lebanon as soon as possible. We hope the competent departments in the Vatican will continue to prepare for the visit and reconsider the decision postponing the visit. He called on those who question Lebanon's unity to stop putting this unity to the test, stressing that Lebanon's unity is safe and has passed every test. He emphasized that Lebanon is too secure for any attempt to fragment and divide it.

Press Rejects Rabin Proposals, Notes Arms Deal

JN1304084694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Press review]

[Text] The newspaper TISHRIN comments on the U.S. Administration's announcement of a deal to supply Israel with sophisticated F-15 assault planes, as well as Yitzhaq Rabin's reiteration of his rejection of complete withdrawal from the Golan and his demand that a channel for secret negotiations with Syria be created, saying: Syria has repeatedly rejected these loaded calls, and announced that the Washington talks are the proper framework for negotiations, and that the Syrian delegation to the peace talks is authorized and empowered to conduct the negotiations. Nonetheless, Israeli officials have not thus far given up their hopes in this regard.

TISHRIN adds: It is clear that the Israelis want to deal with the Arab sides one at a time, just as they have done with the Palestinians, who have allowed themselves to negotiate with their Israeli interlocutors from a position of weakness. The end result is that the Palestinians were dragged to an agreement that has only consecrated occupation and settlement activities in the occupied territories.

TISHRIN asserts that these Israeli calls are falling on deaf ears in Syria, which has had a taste of Israeli games and deceptive tactics.

TISHRIN goes on to say: The Israelis did not engage in the peace process to achieve peace, but rather to extract an Arab recognition of their entity. Their engagement in this process has failed to elicit an Israeli commitment to the principles and resolutions of international legitimacy. The Israelis were encouraged in this by the United States, which has showered them with financial and military aid under the pretext of pacifying the Israelis and prompting them to walk the path of peace. However, the result was that Israel has not made a single move in the direction of peace. As a matter of fact, its security concerns, or to be more exact, its attempts to obtain funds and weaponry from Washington, have been on the increase. Even the U.S. loan guarantees, which Israel pledged will not be used to promote settlement activities, have been used to beef up existing settlements and build new ones. Meanwhile, the United State has failed to lift a finger.

TISHRIN concludes by saying: Given all this, the Arabs cannot work miracles. For, they have done their utmost to advance the peace process and sincerely dealt with the peace efforts. However, their sincere intentions in this regard have run into the Israeli intransigence. As for the U.S. role, it has failed to measure up to the level required by the cause of peace. It has failed to distinguish between the aggressor and the victim. Indeed, it has most often shown a bias in favor of the aggressor.

For its part, the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: After two years of engagement in the peace process, the Israeli prime minister has reiterated his rejection of complete withdrawal from the occupied Golan, and again demanded either the creation of channels for secret negotiations with Syria, or that the level of the bilateral talks negotiators be upgraded. By making such statements against the background of the talks currently under way with the PLO and the international efforts being made to advance the peace process, Rabin is setting impossible conditions to beleaguer the peace process in order to promote Israel's control of the region's resources.

AL-BA'TH adds: Israel's claims regarding the so-called Syrian conditions are groundless. This is because the peace initiative was grounded in the implementation of international legitimacy resolutions in the first place. It goes without saying that these resolutions provide for a complete Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories, including the Golan. Similarly, the Madrid conference and the Washington peace talks were held on the basis of this peace initiative. The Washington peace talks have identified the party that is evading to obstruct peace efforts.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: By reiterating his impossible conditions and emphasizing his rejection of complete withdrawal from the Golan, Rabin has shown that he could not care less about the terms of reference of the peace initiative, chief among which is the principle of trading land for peace. As for Rabin's determination to conclude separate deals with the Arab sides, it will not help achieve peace. For the results of the Oslo and Cairo agreements speak for themselves. Worse still, the potential harm of these agreements is too serious to be underrated, contrary to the views of some people. This is because the region will not see stability except when there is a comprehensive peace based on the withdrawal of occupation troops from all occupied territories.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: In the course of its efforts to promote human rights and ensure compliance with the relevant international resolutions and conventions, the civilized world community must heed Israel's oppression, injustice, and repression against the Palestinian people. Israel must be held responsible for the consequences of its conduct in the occupied territories.

AL-THAWRAH believes that recent developments, which have shown Israel's escalation, maneuvering, and circumvention of the peace process to render it void of any meaningful content, cannot evoke optimism. In such a climate, one cannot envisage a peaceful settlement of the regional conflict. The Tel Aviv rulers' deliberate escalation of the situation in the occupied territories and southern Lebanon, coupled with Rabin's statements on a partial withdrawal from the Golan, are all signals and indications showing that peace has never been, and will

never be Israel's option unless it is imposed by international legitimacy; that is, by the implementation of international legitimacy resolutions on all fronts.

AL-THAWRAH adds: Conquering nations and forcing dictates on them cannot produce peace. Peace becomes achievable when Israel recognizes the rights of others and accepts the restoration of their legitimate rights, which are enshrined in the relevant UN resolutions.

AL-THAWRAH concludes by saying: The path to just and comprehensive peace is not paved with roses. Likewise, peace is not achievable when separate deals and partial solutions are reached, particularly since such deals have demonstrated their futility, and failed thus far to bring security and stability even to their authors, let alone the entire region. It is no longer acceptable to acquiesce to Israel's aggressiveness and noncompliance with the relevant international legitimacy resolutions. It follows from this that nobody, including the U.S. cosponsor of the peace talks, should be allowed to continue to support Israel.

Turkish Interior Minister Arrives in Damascus

Makes Statement at Airport

JN1104183694 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Text] Turkish Interior Minister Nahit Mentese and the delegation accompanying him arrived in Damascus today on a three-day visit to Syria at the invitation of Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah.

He was received at Damascus International Airport by Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah, senior Interior Ministry officials, Turkish Ambassador in Damascus Ugur Ziya, and the embassy staff.

In a statement to a SANA correspondent, he expressed his happiness to visit Syria. He stressed that his visit is an extension of the relations between the Syrian and Turkish peoples. He added: I am certain that this visit will achieve all our people's ambitions and wishes through a discussion of the issues of interest to our countries.

He said: I greatly hope that the visit will achieve its objectives through a convergence of views on current, past, and future issues. We will also try to remove all the obstacles between us.

Concluding his statement, he said: The visit will contribute to entrenching trade, cultural, scientific, and political relations.

Talks on Security Begin

TA1204164994 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1000 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Announcer-read report]

[Text] Turkish-Syrian official talks on security and cooperation have begun in Damascus. Bilateral cooperation to prevent drug and arms smuggling and terror is being discussed at the talks. Ibrahim Gokhan Sari from the Turkish Radio and Television team in Damascus reports the following:

[Begin Sari recording] Interior Minister Nahit Mentese, who is heading the Turkish delegation at the talks, said that the Syrians have responded positively to the problems presented by Turkey and its request for cooperation on those issues. Noting that, however, this is not sufficient, Mentese said: We have to see concrete results. That is what we are waiting for. Pointing out that Turkey attaches great importance to these talks, Mentese added that if the problems are solved the Turkish-Syrian border will become one of peace.

Syrian Interior Minister Muhammad Harbah said that his country is in favor of Turkey's security, stability and territorial integrity. He pointed out that anyone who is acquainted with the structure and geography of the region will realize that it is in Syria's interests to maintain good relations with its neighbors and especially with Turkey. Harbah stated that all the necessary steps are being taken in line with all the agreements concluded so far with Turkey. He noted that the two countries should understand and trust one another, adding that only then can one achieve better relations. The security director general and representatives from the pertinent ministries and organizations are also participating in the talks. [end recording]

Khaddam Receives Turkish Minister

JN1204125394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received Turkish Interior Minister Nahit Mentese and the delegation accompanying him today. Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah and Turkish Ambassador in Damascus Ugur Ziya attended the meeting.

The talks dealt with the situation in the region, bilateral ties, and means of promoting them.

Mentese Told PKK Leaders Not in Country

TA1204172694 Ankara ANATOLIA in English 1600 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Damascus, Syria April 12 (AA)—Interior Minister Nahit Mentese said today that the Turkish delegations told Syrian officials that the separatist terror organization's PKK [Workers Party of Kurdistan] leader Abdullah Ocalan and his friends were instructing their organization, from Syrian and Lebanese soil.

'The Syrian officials deny this, while we insist on it,' Mentese said.

On the second day of his official visit to Syria, Mentese had a two-hour meeting with 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, first assistant to the Syrian head of state.

In a statement afterward, Mentese said that during their meeting with ranking Syrian officials since yesterday, the Turkish delegation stressed that Ocalan was living either in Syria or Lebanon.

'For us, the PKK is the most important problem,' he said. 'We insist on the fact that PKK leaders are based in Syria and Lebanon. They claimed that Lebanon was a separate state. Since we are aware of Syria's influence in Lebanon, we asked them to intervene into the situation. All these talks proceeded in a friendly atmosphere.'

'They also told us that they condemned the terror actions of PKK and it was out of the question for them to cooperate with these terrorists,' Mentese said.

Second Round Talks Held

JN1304061594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0415 GMT 13 Apr 94

[Text] Official talks between the Syrian Arab side headed by Interior Minister Dr. Muhammad Harbah and the Turkish side headed by Turkish Interior Minister Nahit Mentese were resumed at the Ministry of Interior yesterday evening. Members of the two delegations, as well as the Turkish ambassador in Damascus attended.

The two sides continued their discussion of the issues tackled during the previous round of talks. They reiterated the need to continue dialogue and direct contacts between both sides to address all issues that concern both countries. The two sides also commended the existing ties of cooperation between the two ministries in the areas of security and combating crime. They also stressed their eagerness to further promote ties to safeguard the two countries' security and stability.

Afterward, specialized committees held separate meetings to address administrative and security issues of concern to both countries.

Assembly Speaker Meets With Omani Delegation

JN1104184794 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 1730 GMT 11 Apr 94

[Text] People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah today received the Omani Consultative Council delegation led by Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-'Ali al-Qatabi. People's Assembly Secretary Dr. Ibrahim Za'rur and the Omani ambassador in Damascus attended the meeting.

At the outset of the meeting, Qaddurah gave a briefing on the democratic process and the work of the People's Assembly and its committees under the economic and political stability in Syria.

Shaykh al-Qatabi also spoke about the Consultative Council, its work, committees, and tasks.

The talks dealt with relations between the two councils, relations between the two fraternal peoples, and the role these relations and meetings can play in confronting challenges to the Arab nation. The talks also dealt with Arab solidarity and the peace process.

Foreign Minister Receives Delegation

JN1204161694 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1515 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' today received an Omani Consultative Council delegation led by Council Speaker Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin-'Ali al-Qatabi.

Attending the meeting were Ibrahim Za'rur, deputy head of the People's Assembly Arab and International Relations Committee, and 'Abdallah al-Kharusi, Oman's ambassador in Damascus.

The talks dealt with the situation in the region, the latest developments in the peace process, and relations between the two fraternal countries.

Al-Asad Reportedly Rejected Meeting 'Arafat in Cairo

JN1004085794 Kuwait AL-QABAS in Arabic 5 Apr 94 pp 21, 25

[Report by Ilyas Masuh in Damascus]

[Excerpt] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad have discussed the Middle East peace process on the eve of the expected visit to the region by the U.S. secretary of state to activate the peace talks which have been suspended for two months. President al-Asad arrived in Egypt on a visit that was not previously announced.

AL-QABAS learned that President Mubarak proposed to his Syrian counterpart that his country embarks on efforts to activate the Syrian-Israeli track and to achieve rapprochement with the PLO. Al-Asad, however, rejected the idea of holding a tripartite summit that will also include Yasir 'Arafat who will arrive in Cairo today.

Egypt expressed reservations about a Syrian offer to open channels between Cairo and Tehran.

Diplomatic sources in Damascus told AL-QABAS that President al-Asad discussed with Mubarak the recent negative developments in Syrian-American relations and the attempt by some quarters in the U.S. Administration to undermine these relations with the aim of striking at the positive achievements attained in the Geneva summit. The objective of these quarters also is to retaliate for the failure of the attempts to end the Arab boycott of Israel and show their annoyance with the resumption of the Russian role in the region.

The sources also disclosed that President al-Asad will visit Moscow and Tehran in the coming stage. The sources added that all these developments will not affect

Syria's commitment to the peace process in light of the bases it previously defined. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Briefs Cabinet on Developments

JN1204132394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1115 GMT 12 Apr

[Text] The Council of Ministers met under Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi at 1100 today and reviewed the work of the services, economic, and cultural committees.

During this meeting, the Council of Ministers also discussed current political developments in the Arab and international arenas. Foreign Minister Faruq al-Shar' briefed the council on the latest developments and on the results of the contacts and visits that have recently taken place. The foreign minister stressed Syria's rejection of Israeli attempts to drain the peace process of its true essence and to evade commitments to a just and comprehensive peace.

The Council of Ministers also discussed a draft law on endorsing the protocol on scientific and technical cooperation in the field of geology between the Egyptian general authority of geological survey and mining stores, and the general authority for geology and mineral resources in Syria.

The Council of Ministers discussed the topics on its agenda and the issues submitted to it and made the appropriate decisions.

U.S. Aid Blamed for Further Israeli 'Intransigence'

JN1204151394 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1137 GMT 12 Apr 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Israeli officials have continued to make statements on the possibility of making progress in the talks with Syria following the break. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has said that Syria's demand for full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan in return for full peace is unacceptable. He claims that Israel has agreed, in principle, on a withdrawal in the Golan, and that there is some kind of connection between peace and withdrawal on the one hand, and between security arrangements and the timetable of this withdrawal on the other. It is known that the Israelis make these sorts of statements on specific occasions, and deliberately make ambiguous statements to delude the world public, to deceive it, and to conceal the true nature of Israel's hostility to peace. However, these statements no longer deceive anyone. More than 27 months after the Madrid conference, the Washington peace talks are still at square one and there is no sign of any change in the Israeli position. In fact, Rabin has rejected the principle of full withdrawal from the Golan and went back to singing his old tune on withdrawal in the Golan. He is talking about a partial withdrawal, which Syria rejected from the very beginning, and with which it cannot deal at all, especially since it constitutes a violation of Syria's clear rights and sovereignty on its territory. It is also a violation of the UN Security Council resolutions, the basis of the Madrid conference, and the essence of the U.S. initiative based on the land-for-peace formula.

Syria has said many times that it will accept no compromise in the Golan or partial or phased settlements, and that peace and occupation cannot go together. However, the Israeli rulers, who focus their efforts on devouring the occupied Arab territories, adopted the policy of maneuvering and procrastination, and of torpedoing the peace efforts from within the Washington talks. They sought to split the negotiating Arab ranks in an attempt to undermine the principle of a just and comprehensive peace on all fronts of the conflict. They believe that they can succeed on the other fronts of the conflicts just as they have succeeded in dragging the Palestinian side into a partial agreement that is completely at odds with the desired peace.

Subjugating the occupied territories to a full military siege, and escalating confrontations, clashes, and acts of violence, proves to anyone seeking the truth that the separate agreement did not bring peace. In fact, it has further complicated the situation and made it even more volatile. The Israeli officials have thus far done nothing other than stab the international peace efforts in the back. In fact, they will be exposing the peace process to grave danger if they insist on their intransigent stands and their rejection of a full withdrawal from the Golan and the other occupied territories.

It is clear that the U.S. Administration's huge financial and military aid to Israel contributes to Israel's intransigence. The U.S. Administration has claimed that this aid will actually encourage Israel to join the peace process once it is reassured about its alleged security problems. What is happening is just the opposite, for Israel has become more intransigent in evading the requirements of the peace process. At the same time, its security demands have increased. Observers who have followed developments in the Middle East believe that the U.S. Administration is responsible for a great deal of the stumbling in the peace process, for why would Israel, which is essentially saturated with a hostile and expansionist spirit, submit to the will of peace while it is receiving unlimited financial and military aid?